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ABSTRACT

This monograph, third in the reading series of four, is directed to the classroom teacher, who is usually the first to become aware of the child's reading problems. The teacher should be able either to correct those difficulties or refer the child with more serious problems to a reading specialist. Related documents in the kit are: (4-B) "References": (4-C) "Techniques for Classroom Diagnosis of Reading Problems"; (4-D) "Individualizing Reading Instruction": and (4-E) "Current Reading Research for the Teacher" available from ERIC. Related publications are ED 034 078, ED 034 079 and ED 034 081. (LS)

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PREP

CORRECTING READING PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOM

No. 4-A

PREP is . . .

- *a synthesis and interpretation of research, development, and current practice on a specific educational topic*
- *a method of getting significant R&D findings to the practitioner quickly*
- *the best thinking of researchers interpreted by specialists in simple language*
- *the focus of research on current educational problems*
- *a format which can be easily and inexpensively reproduced for wide distribution*
- *raw material in the public domain which can be adapted to meet local needs*
- *an attempt to improve our Nation's schools through research*
- P *utting*
  R *esearch into*
  E *ducational*
  P *ractice*

This monograph, third in the reading series, is directed principally to the classroom teacher, who is usually the first person to become aware of a child's reading problems. The teacher should be able either to correct these difficulties as they arise or to refer the child with the more serious problems to a reading specialist who has been trained to handle them.

The monograph was written by Carl B. Smith, Barbara Carter, and Gloria Dapper under contract with the Bureau of Research of the Office of Education.

Related documents in the kit are:

"References" - No. 4-B
"Techniques for Classroom Diagnosis of Reading Problems" - No. 4-C
"Individualizing Reading Instruction" - No. 4-D
"Current Reading Research for the Teacher" - No. 4-E

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The Extent of the Problem

In a typical school class of 30, reading ability will range from those whose severe problems prevent them from reading at all to those who read with facility. Strang reports that from 1 to 5 percent of all children have severe disabilities resulting from physical, psychological or neurological disorders, from 10 to 25 percent of children have moderately severe disabilities resulting from failure to master necessary skills, and from 40 to 60 percent of children have mild disabilities resulting from minor difficulty with some basic skill (Strang, 1968, p. 2). [1] Applying these percentage figures to a school class of 30, one or two children might have problems severe enough to warrant clinical help; from three to six children might have problems severe enough to require remedial help outside the classroom; of the remaining children, between 12 and 18 might have mild skill problems that require classroom attention if they are not to develop into more severe disabilities. The remaining children, who are doing just about what can be expected of them for their age and grade, might display slight difficulties in specific skills or might require individualized programs to prevent them from losing their skills and interest through boredom.

In far too many schools, the classroom teacher is expected to deal with all 30 children, including those who cannot learn to read without a highly technical diagnosis and treatment. School systems are now beginning to recognize that such an assignment is impossible for the classroom teacher to carry out. Remedial reading programs, described in the fourth monograph of this series, give an indication of increasing recognition of the need for special programs.

The classroom teacher is in a pivotal position, since the only general solution to reading difficulties is to prevent them from reaching the crisis stage. Without prevention of this nature, the number of children and the expense involved in treatment through remedial programs assume such proportions that school systems are unable to deal with them.

No one is in a better position to prevent reading problems or to correct them as they appear than is the classroom teacher. An elementary school teacher, for instance, who meets a class for 175 days, has about 800 hours for observation. With a class, say, of 30 pupils theoretically a teacher has more than 25 hours to devote to each pupil. Even granting the time spent for group instruction, the classroom teacher has an opportunity for individual observation and instruction that is denied anyone else in the school system.

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[1] See References, 4-B, for documents cited in the text.

The secondary school teacher does not have as much time for observation of reading difficulties because he meets his students usually for only an hour a day and, therefore, has approximately 180 hours of observation time for any one student. This does not excuse him, however, from taking a diagnostic look at the reading and comprehension skills of the children that come into his classes; it only means that he will naturally be less specific, more broad, and more general in the observations he makes. He will be more concerned with the child's ability to recognize the vocabulary pertinent to his subject, his ability to read different length selections and respond to appropriate comprehension questions, and his ability to make use of the various study skill activities that are used as part of teaching.

Environmental Factors

The classroom teacher must be more aware than anyone else of the effect of environment on the performance of children. Recently much has been written about environmental factors as a cause of reading difficulty, including the first monograph in this series. What the classroom teacher should be aware of is that a knowledge of the home and neighborhood, and language patterns that the children have, can give him significant diagnostic information and help to adjust instruction to meet the specific needs of the children in his classroom. A child from a home where language is important and conversation is a significant part of family life will usually have a much easier time learning to read than a child who has had little home experience with elaborate language patterns (Bernstein, 1960; Hilliard and Troxell, 1937).

What are the factors in the home that are most often related to reading problems? A low socioeconomic level is one, although parental attitudes and behavior may be more significant that the parents' education, income, or race (Dave, 1963). The size of the family, the child's position in it, and the opportunity the home presents for learning experiences relevant to school are also important (Gordon, 1965). The usual picture is of a large, impoverished family, usually mother-dominated (Gill and Spilka, 1965), living in a noisy, overcrowded atmosphere (Deutsch, 1963) that is often permeated with an underlying panic. The basic necessities are uncertain, adults unpredictable (Maas, 1951), the world suspect and threatening. Communication is often through gesture and other nonverbal means (Bloom, 1965; Milner, 1951), while the language used is terse, not necessarily grammatical, and limited in form. The home has few books, few toys, and little self-instructional material. The children rarely venture beyond their own neighborhood or even their own block. They are rarely read to, and there is little contact between parent and child. Rewards and punishment (often physical) are immediate (Kohn, 1959; Leshan, 1952). Learning to postpone gratification is as irrelevant to their way of thinking as learning for learning's sake (Gordon, 1964).

In such a noisy and chaotic environment, children learn to adapt as best they can. They may learn, for instance, to screen out sounds, sometimes only too well. Their habits of listening and hearing, their speech patterns and pronunciation may prove inappropriate to the traditional learning situation in school (Jenson, 1963; John, 1963). In addition, they may be undernourished or lacking in sleep, inattentive, disturbingly aggressive, or ominously withdrawn (McKee and Leader, 1955). Their absentee rate is probably high.

This generalization, however, suffers the drawback of all generalizations: It is just that and nothing more. It points with accuracy to no individual case. Some children of poverty have learned to read easily despite economic deprivation; some economically middle-class homes are as barren of cultural advantages as the poorest (Gordon, 1965). Middle-class parents, whose anxiety about their child's progress in school takes the form of reproach rather than encouragement, may contribute as much to their child's reading problems as lower-class parents who were dropouts and whose hostility or lack of sympathy toward school is reflected in their child's attitude.

Data about the home and neighborhood environment, then, can offer significant insights into learning, study habits, and motivational drives--important factors in the treatment of any reading problem.

Even the most unskilled observer can spot the nonreader. (Recognizing the reasons for his inability to read is another matter.) But spotting specific reading difficulties and being able to analyze the skills involved in the reading process require knowledge, training, and experience. After having analyzed the problems, knowing what to do about them is something else. The remainder of this monograph is intended to help the classroom teacher sort out the problems and learn how other teachers are coping with them effectively.

Diagnosing Reading Problems in the Classroom

With any problem, diagnosis should precede action. In the diagnosis of reading problems, the teacher tries to understand the child's reading strengths as well as his weaknesses. The more his strengths and weaknesses can be pinpointed, the more likely it is that a corrective program can be devised that will take advantage of what he does well and attack directly those skills he lacks.

A few general things can be said about reading diagnosis. For one, it should be continuous and interwoven with treatment. Secondly, the earlier the problems are discovered, the more hope there is for conquering them. A specific diagnosis is probably the key factor in prevention as well as in remediation of reading difficulties. Hopefully, diagnosis leads to "diagnostic instruction," which attempts to individualize instruction to match the teaching with the problems to be overcome.

The first step in classroom diagnosis is to describe the reading performance in terms of vocabulary, word recognition, sentence and paragraph comprehension, and related abilities (Strang, 1968, p. 4). Teacher observation and informal and standardized tests, which will be discussed later, are the chief tools for the teacher. Other indications might come from classroom exercises related to reading performance, short vocabulary quizzes over assigned new words, paragraph reading followed by writing sentences stating main ideas, new vocabulary words introduced through attention to work analysis skills. With some students who are having relatively minor trouble, the teacher can spot the difficulties immediately and take equally immediate steps to correct the problems.

Another diagnostic technique for the classroom teacher is to consider behavior, other than reading performance, which could be affecting the pupil's reading. The teacher may note, for example, that the pupil is passive or has a low energy level so that he simply cannot put out the effort that reading demands. Some pupils have such meager speaking vocabularies that it is impossible for them to decode or understand the words they encounter in reading. Still others display emotional problems, such as anxiety, that keep them from concentrating in school. And there are many instances of poor work habits, with an "anything goes" attitude, that can influence a child's ability to read (Strang, 1968, p. 5).

Checklists can be helpful in estimating pupil skills, attitudes, and behavior. A sample checklist for use in observing and evaluating attitudes toward reading is reproduced below. The teacher might use + or - to indicate the presence or lack of the attitude under consideration. Other checklists can be devised to serve other needs.

Inventory of Growth in Attitudes Toward Reading

	Judy	Ann	Jerry	Ed
Does he anticipate reading periods with pleasures?				
Does he use books frequently during free periods?				
Does he find opportunities for reading at home?				
Does he read newspapers and magazines?				
Does he show interest in reading a variety of books?				
Does he read for information?				
Does he usually finish the books he starts?				
What kinds of books does he likes best?				
Does he make frequent use of the school or public library?				

A deeper level of diagnosis comes from an attempt to analyze activities related to the process of reading, such as auditory and visual perception, differentiation, association, retention, analysis, and evaluation leading to motor, visual, or vocal output. *The Role of the Reading Specialist in Conquering Reading Problems,* the fourth monograph in this series, describes this and other levels of diagnosis more fully. Some levels of diagnosis are ordinarily reserved for clinicians who include in a diagnosis such things as psychological, sociological, and intellectual disabilities that prevent a child from learning to read.

Two Objectives

In a diagnosis, the classroom teacher has two objectives in mind. One is to determine the correct instructional level for the child. This level can be defined as that at which the child can read successfully with direction from the teacher. At this level, the child should be able to comprehend 75 to 80 percent of what he reads, to pronounce at least 95 percent of the words encountered, and to read orally with natural rhythm and good phrasing (Betts, 1946, p. 539). In any given classroom, it is likely that there are as many as five instructional levels. The second objective of classroom diagnosis is to discover the specific skills a child lacks. If this objective is not kept in mind, the teacher might continue instructing the child in skills he has already mastered and ignore those on which he needs special help. (See 4-C, "Techniques for Classroom Diagnosis of Reading Problems.")

Finding the instructional levels for children in the classroom and identifying the specific reading skill weaknesses that each child has can be accomplished through various measurement and evaluation techniques. Formal group survey tests, informal inventories, and daily observation in the classroom are three specific ways of identifying the needs of children.

Group survey tests are one instrument to measure comprehension, vocabulary, and reading rate, as well as determining the grade level at which the child reads comfortably. The Gates Primary Reading Tests and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development are instruments widely used for group survey. In addition, the publishers of basal readers have produced tests intended to be used to see whether a child is ready for a specific book in a reading series.

Survey tests are diagnostic only in that they give limited information on vocabulary, comprehension, and reading rate. However, more diagnostic information can be obtained through the use of teacher-made tests and informal reading inventories.

Teacher Tests

Probably the most widely used diagnostic tools are the teacher-made tests. In these, the teacher makes up the test on the spot and is looking for only one or two things. For instance, in working with a pupil, the teacher may wonder if the child can identify a certain digraph, such as *ch*. She gives him several words beginning and ending with *ch*. If she wants to test the child's comprehension, she simply asks him to read a paragraph, close the book, and then tell her what was in the paragraph or answer questions about it.

The informal reading inventory is somewhat more structured. Using a reading series the child has not seen before, the teacher has him read orally sample paragraphs at varying levels of difficulty. Comprehension questions dealing with facts and ideas follow each reading. By carefully marking errors made in oral reading and by evaluating the kinds and frequency of errors and answers to comprehension questions, the teacher can identify the child's independent, instructional, and frustration levels. (Johnson and Kress have a reading aids booklet on the development and use of the informal reading inventories, published by the International Reading Association.)

A word should be said about the various reading levels a child--or an adult--has. The independent reading level is the one at which the person reads easily and confortably, where he reads with and for pleasure (Betts, 1946, p. 446). The instructional level is that at which he can pronounce 80 percent of the words or comprehends less than 70 percent (Betts, 1946, p. 539). The frustration level is the one at which the reader bogs down hopelessly (Betts, 1946, p. 451). Group survey tests usually indicate a child's frustration level. The child will usually have a higher instructional level than independent reading level; so if it appears that he likes to read materials that the teacher thinks is too easy for him, he is simply seeking the level at which he can relax. In too many classrooms, especially those where instruction is not geared to individual differences, many of the children may be forced to read at their frustration levels.

Information To Look For

Whatever instrument is used, a teacher is looking for information about the child's general reading skills, his word attack skills, and other relevant data.

Under general reading skills, the teacher would note expression, nature of enunciation, skill in phrasing, word-by-word reading, physical habits during reading, and attitude toward reading. Word-recognition skills encompass the use of context to guess the word, adequacy of sight words, and adequacy of procedure in phonics and structural analysis. Word attack skills will show up the pupil's ability to blend sounds, analyze words, syllabicate, recognize parts of compound words, and recognize specific vowels and consonants. Word-recognition difficulties the reader might display are reversals and the wrong beginning, middle, or ending. Other difficulties the child might display are repeating words, omitting them, or refusing them.

Related to general reading ability are such data as whether the child hears and sees well or whether he has speech difficulties or other physical defects that might interfere with learning. His abilities to concentrate on and persist in tasks are directly related to his learning to read.

Classroom Observation

The most obvious and perhaps the most important diagnostic technique is the teacher's classroom observation of the child. This technique is used every day by every classroom teacher, and is probably the best one for understanding how a child reads. But it tells nothing about *why* a child reads as he does.

Dr. Ruth Strang (Strang, 1961, p. 43) suggests four safeguards for the classroom teacher to avoid misinterpreting observations of the child:

1. Since the student is always changing and growing, an observation that was made last year may not describe his present reading performance.

2. A teacher can observe only a small part of a student's total behavior. On the basis of such limited information, the teacher can make only tentative generalizations about the student's reading.

3. Observations made by a teacher may tell more about the teacher than about the student. His first impression of the student, his philosophy of education, and many other factors may color what he sees.

4. Ideally, observations should be interpreted in conjunction with interview, test, and other data. However, observations often are the only data that are available at the moment, and sometimes action should not be deferred.

The more a teacher is aware of what *could* be observed, the more she can improve her observation skills.

As a child is telling an experience in the classroom, the teacher could observe many things:

- whether the child's use of language shows a rich vocabulary or one that is meager or even wrong
- whether the child speaks in complete sentences, and whether he uses complex sentences
- whether he shows creative or bizarre imagination--or none at all
- whether he shows a sense of humor (humor is highly correlated with intelligence which, in turn, is highly correlated with reading ability)
- whether he is interested or apathetic
- whether he is self-confident or shy

When the child reads aloud, the teacher has a chance to see what skills he has in recognizing words, in pronunciation, phrasing, and expression. The student will also give away his feelings (attitudes) about reading, either by sitting up straight, eager to read next, or slouching in his seat, paying little attention.

If a child substitutes words in a sentence, he gives clues about his abilities. If the word is incorrect but makes good sense, then he probably comprehends what he reads. If it makes no sense, he is just pronouncing words with no understanding or regard for meaning.

Group instruction and discussion present many opportunities for observation, but also bring up some questions for the classroom teacher. During group reading periods, the teacher can observe the children who like to participate and willingly do so. During group discussion, a usually silent child may reveal undetected ability, such as responding to a story or a picture with exceptional originality. However, there are pitfalls in group instruction. For one thing, the children probably do not all read at the same level and so there is always the danger of the good readers being bored by the material and the poor readers being unable to follow it. Even so, group interaction has its salutary effects. The brighter students may stimulate those having difficulties and encourage them to read better. The poorer ones may catch the sense of excitement in reading and be motivated to learn.

It is up to the teacher to see that the poorer students are not embarrassed by having the others laugh at their mistakes.

The more able the classroom teacher, the fewer children who will need remedial instruction. Providing intelligent reading instruction depends on the ability of the teacher to diagnose the child's reading status, to teach him on his appropriate instructional level, and to develop a reading program that is sequential and relevant to the child.

Part of the classroom teacher's job is to know when a disabled reader needs greater help than can be offered in the classroom. Pupils who should be recommended for remedial classes or for clinical study are sometimes not referred by teachers who feel that such referral might, in some way, be a reflection on their teaching abilities. An honest recognition of the limits of time and expertise open to the classroom teacher would be far better for the child who, if he is denied extra and expert help, could be doomed to the life of an illiterate. It is not always easy for the classroom teacher to know when the child ceases to benefit from instruction available in the classroom and needs special attention outside the classroom on a more individual basis. In those cases where the teacher has difficulty in making a decision, it is good for him to discuss the problem with the principal or the school counselor and the reading specialist. These are the people involved in making decisions about the movement of children from one kind of teaching situation to another; and, gradually, some criteria should be established that would help all classroom teachers making the decisions. Naturally some of these decisions have to be based upon the availability of a reading specialist and the number of children who need treatment by that specialist. It should also be evident that the teacher must provide some observations and data on any child that he wants to refer for special help. Part of that referral should include a statement of what he has done in the classroom to try to correct the disabilities that have been observed.

Working With Groups and Individuals to Correct Reading Problems

Children learn to read in a number of ways, not through a single approach. The Harvard-Carnegie study found that schools use basal readers, experience charts followed by basal readers, phonics programs that precede and accompany basal readers, the language experience approach, and individualized reading programs to teach children to read (Austin, et al., 1961, p. 21). Most of these so-called approaches are associated with specific kinds of materials and so we are accustomed to thinking of correcting problems in reading by referring to materials of a special kind. A more fundamental notion of how to correct reading difficulties, however, should be to think of the approach to teaching children to read as a system. A system is a planned strategy for instruction with an underlying rationale. If the teacher knows this strategy and rationale, he can more easily identify problems that the children are having and take steps to overcome those problems. Most of the approaches to teaching reading, especially at the beginning level, can be arranged into four kinds of systems: (1) the controlled vocabulary approach, (2) the multisensory language arts approach, (3) the programed instruction approach, and (4) the individualized approach. Each of these systems represents a way of getting children to look at reading, handle the analysis of new words, develop an attitude toward the process of reading, and build habits of interest and interpretation of what is read.

The controlled vocabulary system approach is the most structured of the four systems for teaching reading. The learner reads from a book which is carefully graded in terms of reading difficulty and controlled from the standpoint of vocabulary, sentence length, and complexity of story. The learning principle of the controlled vocabulary approach is to proceed from the known to the unknown. This principle applies both to reading vocabulary and to the content of the stories that appear in the readers. Thus, very familiar words associated with the home or neighborhood environment are used in the beginning stages of reading. These words are repeated again and again so that the only problem is one of visual recognition and not one of meaning or comprehension. One of the features of the controlled vocabulary approach is the carefully selected vocabulary and its planned introduction of elements in a given sequence. The child is introduced to and practices the elements until he has mastered them. This approach or system is the one most frequently used by school systems in the United States (Austin, 1961, p. 21).

The multisensory language arts approach contrasts in structure and organization with the controlled vocabulary approach. The multisensory language arts approach springs directly from the interests and needs of the child, thus very little structure can be predetermined. In this approach, the children create or select their own reading materials and a teacher uses inductive techniques to get the children to understand word recognition techniques and to comprehend sentences and longer passages. The emphasis of this approach is on the interrelatedness of various communication skills. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing form various facets of personal communication, and of course the basis for all communication is thinking. Therefore the principle on which this system operates is this: What a person thinks can be said; what he says can be understood and written; what he writes can be read and understood by someone else (Loban, 1963; Strickland, 1962). In the beginning stages of this approach there is a decided attempt to show the relationship between oral language and written language. Often teachers ask children to dictate stories to them, and the teacher writes down the stories with the children. The students are then encouraged to read back from the paper what they have just dictated. Thus, reading instruction utilizes the language and experience of the child; and, as he grows in his ability to read, with the teacher identifying words and sounds as necessary, the child begins to select books that are appropriate to his interests and to his reading level--all the while sharing his ideas and his new-found interests with other members of the class. This is not to say that commercial materials are not used, for teachers often supplement the experience stories and individual exercises generated from these stories with exercises from commercial workbooks that fit the needs of the children as the teacher identifies them.

The programed instruction approach takes the student through a series of carefully planned steps, often in the form of statements or questions, leading to pre-designated behavior. The child, for example, would be able to make distinctions among a number of words and find those which rhyme with the word *rat*. Programed instruction usually relies quite heavily on carefully sequenced materials that enable a child to move at his own pace and to make inductive conclusions about words and sentences. One of the significant features of programed instruction is that it provides immediate reinforcement to the learner and enables him to see when he's making a correct or an incorrect response.

The individualized approach is related to the language arts and the programed approaches in these two ways: It enables a child to select his own reading material based on his interests and needs, and the child proceeds at his own rate through the development of reading skills. Nearly all reading is done from trade books that the child selects himself after a conference with the teacher. The teacher's responsibility is to provide a checking system and to evaluate the child's progress. Children are brought together only when the teacher finds that several of them need an explanation or practice in a given reading skill, or as a mutual interest among the children indicates the desirability of having discussion or creative activity related to this interest.

It would be advantageous, of course, for every learner to be matched with the system that best suited his personality and his learning style. The matching of learner with a system to suit his needs will, however, usually not occur, due to the organizational pattern and the materials selection practices of schools in the United States. Even if learners were matched correctly, that still would not eliminate all problems, for some learners are going to experience difficulty no matter what system they are in. The advantage of teachers knowing about several systems is that they can adjust their instruction to individuals and use techniques from various systems when they find that students learn certain phases of reading best when a particular approach is used. Generally, however, the same techniques that are effective in the general developmental program can be used effectively in corrective activities.

Each of the systems described here indicates different arrangements, or organizational patterns, for classroom instruction. The same variation is necessary in organizing classes for corrective instruction. A classroom has to have flexibility for corrective instruction and has to be organized so that it can be carried on with a minimum amount of confusion. Schools across the country have experimented with a number of techniques for corrective reading activities in the classroom. These activities can have two different focuses: One is aimed at prevention and the other, at the correction of a specific skill deficiency found in a specific individual at a given time.

Schools interested in prevention organize a classroom and carry on scheduled activities that are designed to eliminate some long-standing problems. For example, some schools set up listening posts in classrooms and have the children go through a series of exercises to develop good language patterns, thus applying preventive measures aimed at correcting reading difficulties. On the other hand, upon realizing that a child does not know how to summarize or give the main idea of a paragraph, the teacher can have that child work in a conference corner with a series of exercises that he takes from a supply of books in the classroom.

Many of the administrators and teachers interviewed for this monograph believe that, unless the classroom structure is changed to encourage work on specific problems, either for groups or for individuals, corrective activity is likely to go undone. The next few paragraphs, then, discuss a number of instances in which teachers have organized their classrooms and instruction, or changed the structure of their classrooms to carry on corrective reading activities. (The reader must consider the system under which he is working and try to adapt the suggestions of these successful organizational patterns to his own situation.)

Here are some of the elements that were used in successful programs:

1. Materials
2. Rearrangement of desks and equipment
3. Personnel changes
4. Reduction in class size
5. Ungraded approach
6. Team teaching

Successful Programs

Given below are brief descriptions of the organization of successful programs for corrective reading in the classroom. In many cities teachers and administrators reported a decided improvement in students who were being treated in the classroom under these organizational patterns. As mentioned before, the patterns naturally have to be adapted to whatever system or conditions exist in the teacher's own classroom.

The teacher, though interested in meeting the needs of the individual, faces an entire class. Organizing instruction so that a class may be taught as a community, with all members doing educationally worthwhile things, is the teacher's goal. At the same time, instruction must be adjusted to meet the needs and characteristics of individuals. This means that the classroom and the teacher must be organized so that the teacher can devote attention to children who need special guidance. The problem of adjusting instruction to individual differences in a classroom is probably the most difficult of all.

Providing Materials and Equipment--Title I reports from the U.S. Office of Education and the Austin and Smith study (1967) summarize many of the innovative ways in which school systems are attempting to reorganize the classroom for more corrective work on reading. The most frequent change, though not innovative, has been the additon of new materials and equipment. Many reading directors feel that providing the materials and equipment is an initial step in getting corrective activities into the classroom. However, simply providing materials and equipment will not assure improved reading ability on the part of the children. These must be easily accessible to the teacher and the students; and the teachers, of course, must have training in their use. Probably the most significant benefit of having a wide variety of materials and equipment, beyond simply enabling the teacher to turn quickly to a handy reference on corrective instruction, is increased student interest. The abundance and availability of these items spark the student's interest and can lead to learning, provided that interest is capitalized on.

Choosing materials and equipment poses some problems, and sometimes the people who make the choices do not know enough about reading to select materials that will serve classroom needs. San Francisco, California, tries to solve this problem through their "Market Basket" plan. Principals choose the material and equipment for their schools. They are shown reading materials from a wide variety of publishers and are asked to consult with their teachers on what should be most beneficial in the classrooms. This program is called the "Market Basket" approach because all the teachers have the opportunity to pick and choose. The principal then orders materials according to the amount of money that is available to him. 2/

2/ Descriptions of programs and activities in the schools are taken from the Austin and Smith study of Title I reading programs (1967), the report by the President's Advisory Council on Education, and from on-site visitations by the authors.

Another interesting development is that some school districts hire their own teachers and reading consultants to write and publish materials that are especially suitable for the population in that school district. In Sarasota County, Florida, for example, a diagnostic reading test was developed by the faculty. The test was given to the students in the county and then county norms were established. Many detailed activities for analyzing reading problems and a course of study were prepared by the reading faculty for use by the classroom teachers. The course of study offers suggestions for helping students who need it in specific areas covered by the test.

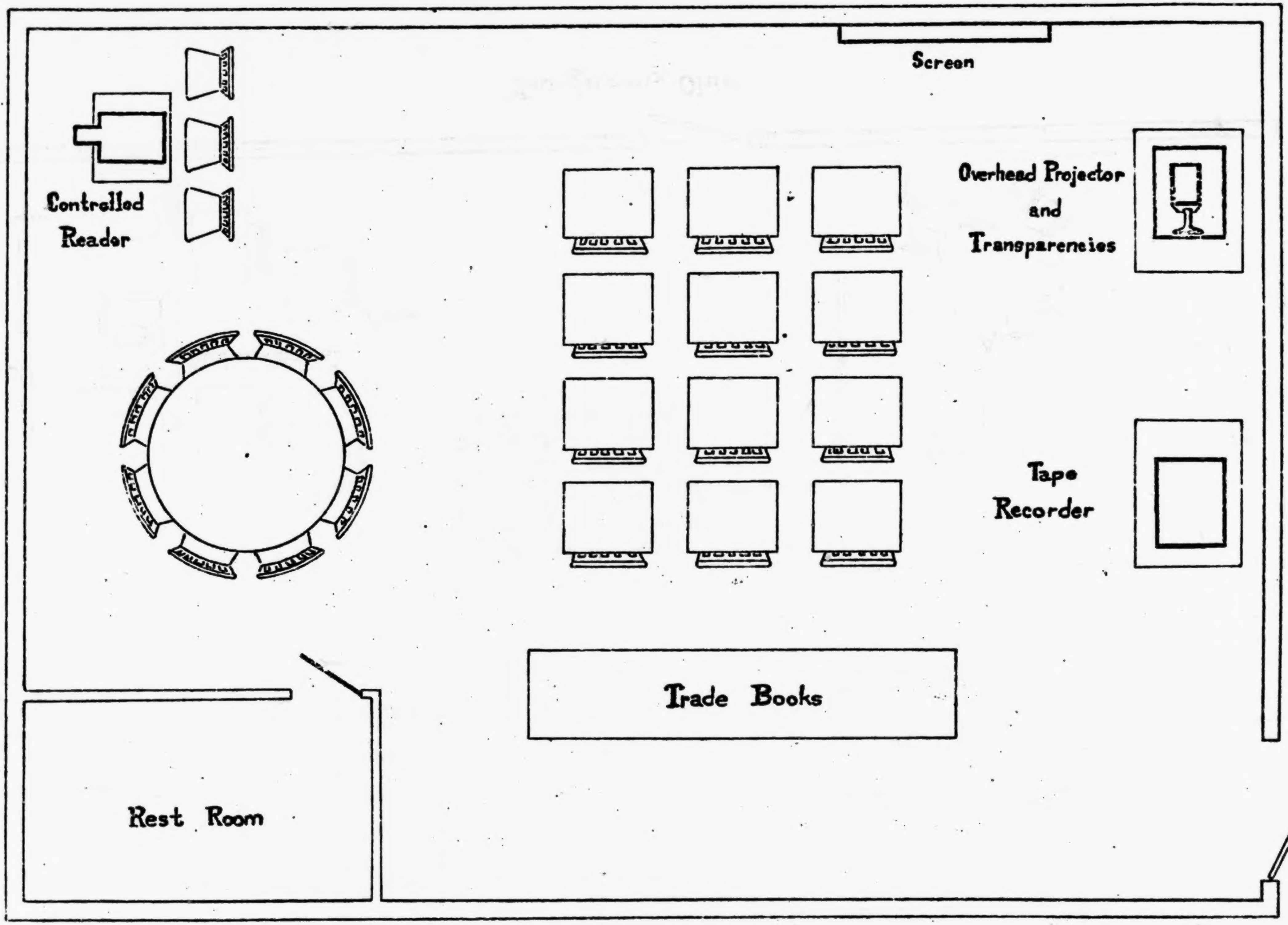
Richmond, California, not only wrote its own study guide for corrective reading in the classroom but also developed sample exercises to be used by the classroom teacher for specific skill development.

Rearranging Classroom Desks--Some administrators feel that, in order to bring about diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties in the classroom, the physical arrangement of the classroom must first be changed. Changing desk arrangements alone may make a teacher more conscious of individuals and individual activity, and so the diagnosis and correction take place.

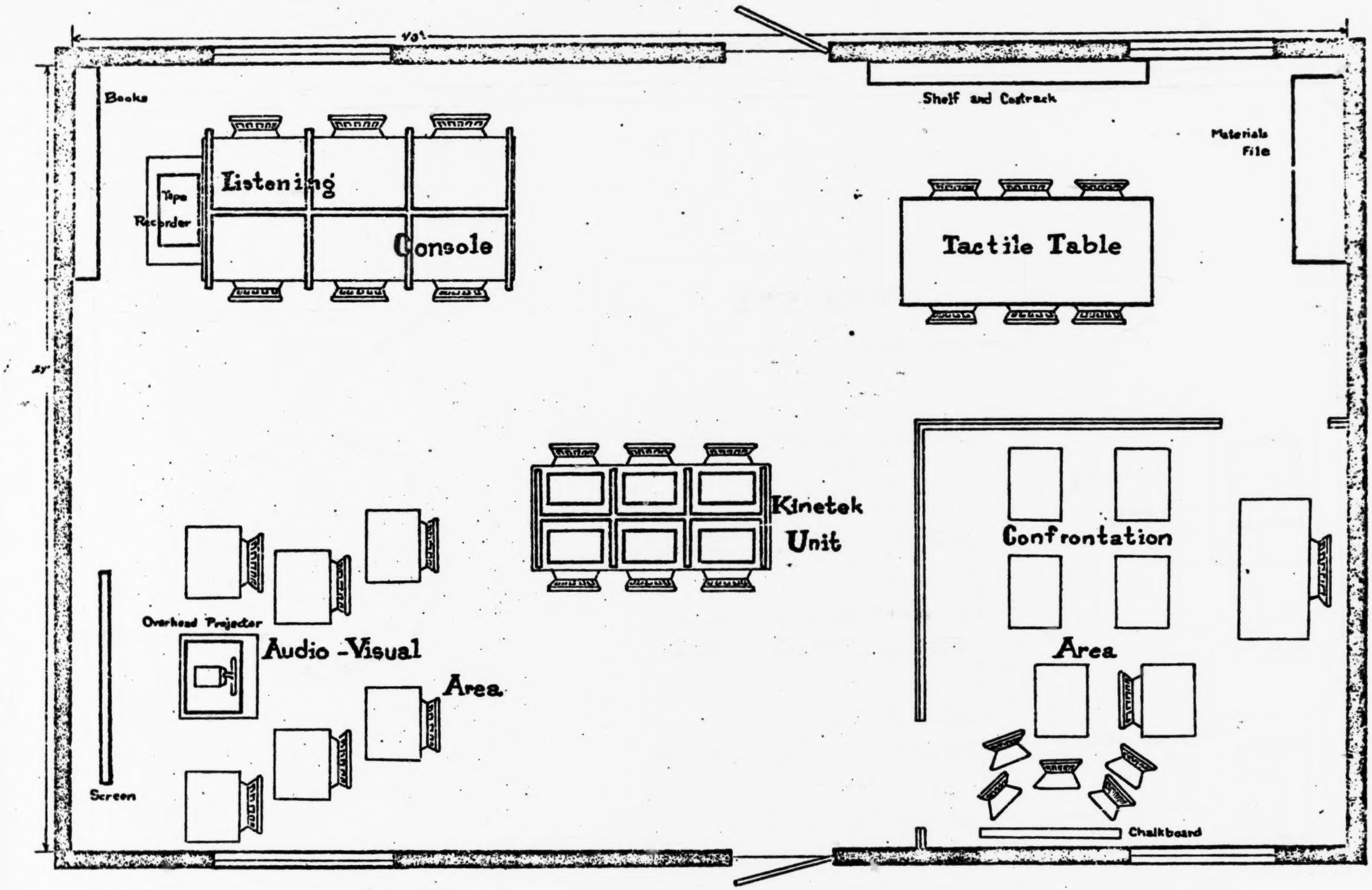
One of the simpler arrangements for handling individual problems is the inclusion of a listening post in the classroom so that the teacher can tape an individual exercise, with specific directions for a child or small group of children, and then have them listen and respond to this tape through headphone sets. Santa Maria, California, is one of many cities where this is done. There, one tape recorder and phonograph can be plugged into a unit containing twelve headsets. The equipment sits on a utility cart for mobility and can be moved from one corner of the room to another.

A more elaborate example of rearranging the classroom for specific corrective activities can be seen in classrooms in Pinellas County, Florida. Four different areas are set up for different kinds of instruction. Different kinds of instruction can be given simultaneously. Pinellas County uses a tape recording area, a controlled reader area, an overhead projector area, and a library area. The accompanying diagram indicates the arrangement.

In Youngstown, Ohio, another approach to reorganizing the classroom provides for five different areas of instruction within the same classroom. This approach, however, requires the use of a teacher aide or teacher assistant in order for the five areas to operate successfully. There is a 12′ by 12′ glass-enclosed area called the confrontation area in which the teacher can instruct a small group of students. The room is also equipped with a kinesthetic unit--a comparamentalized table housing six standard typewriters; a tactile table--a 3′ by 6′ table for six students who need sensory experiences such as puzzles or manipulative games; a listening console with headphones--to develop specific listening skills through the use of specially prepared tapes; and audiovisual area--containing an overhead projector, filmstrip projector, and a screen. These areas are used for a variety of instructional and motivational purposes. The accompanying diagram illustrates how the various parts of the room are arranged.


Screen
Controlled Reader
Overhead Projector and Transparencies
Tape Recorder
Trade Books
Rest Room

Pinellas County, Florida


40'
25'
Books
Tape Recorder
Listening Console
Shelf and Castrack
Materials File
Tactile Table
Kinetek Unit
Confrontation Area
Chalkboard
Overhead Projector
Audio -Visual Area
Screen

Youngstown, Ohio

Many school districts have given the classroom teacher the opportunity to correct reading problems by offering them additional help. These programs may have been initiated under the concept of lowering the teacher-pupil ratio and thus giving the child more frequent adult contact and direction. This approach works well where teachers have been guided in the use of an assistant and consequently know how to use an additonal person in the classroom.

New personnel may range in formal school training from volunteers recruited from the community to highly trained reading specialists and consultants. The addition of good personnel can be a great benefit to the classroom teacher and to the students. The specific duties or obligations of these teacher aides vary greatly. The teacher aide, whether full- or part-time can relieve the teacher of many routine tasks, including some tasks that are directly associated with instruction. Santa Maria, California, hired teacher aides for every elementary classroom. Each side worked two hours a day in the school. The duties of these aides varied from school to school, but their primary purpose was to relieve the teacher of clerical duties. Some of the teachers had the aides listen to children read, and some also read stories to the children.

Some school districts use teacher aides as instructional assistants In Youngstown, Ohio, the teacher sets up a plan for each of the pupils in the classroom, and the teacher aide carries out some sections of the lesson plan of each child. The aide gives the child directions as he prepares to write his own story, or sets up a flashcard game so he can practice his vocabulary, or puts on appropriate tapes and gives the child the worksheet he needs to follow along.

Some school districts have hired highly qualified help to provide guidance for the classroom teacher. Teachers should take advantage of the expertise of the reading consultants or reading resource person to find out what diagnostic and corrective techniques are available. Some school systems like Cincinnati, Ohio, Kansas City, Missouri, and Detroit, Michigan, have one reading resource teacher for every inner-city school. Teachers are free to ask the resource teacher to acquaint them with materials, to demonstrate how to handle a small group of children having specific reading problems, to come into the classroom and diagnose a child's difficulty, to take a child privately for diagnosis, to plan a program of treatment to be carried out in the classroom, and to demonstrate a variety of techniques for treatment of children with some of the minor reading problems that the classroom teacher is able to treat. Other school systems have similar resource teachers, but share them among two or more schools. Los Angeles, California, and Cleveland, Ohio, operate on a shared basis. The teacher should keep in mind that the resource teacher is available for his benefit and the benefit of the students, and he should feel free to have that teacher come in any time or often to help out.

Another type of classroom modification is the addition of teachers hired specifically to circulate from room to room to do corrective reading. One form of this circulating teacher can be found in Oakland, California, and Denver, Colorado, where they have "swing" teachers. In Oakland, three teachers work in every two classrooms. Two of the teachers are regular homeroom teachers and the third is a "swing" teacher who spends half the day in one classroom and the other half in the second. Usually he engages in corrective reading activity with those children who need help. The swing teams find it convenient to rearrange the furniture so they can perform at the same time. They put up dividers, bookshelves, or racks so that one corner or even one third of the room is blocked off for the swing teacher. In New York City a slightly different arrangement has been made in order to reduce class size. There, in the primary grades, two teachers perform in one classroom.

Where two professional teachers are teaching separately in the same classroom, some rearranging of classroom structure is usually necessary. Teachers have used their ingenuity in creating small group confrontation areas as well as large group and general work areas. Most corrective activities take place in small groups in what is known in some classrooms as the teacher's corner. The children return to a larger work area to carry out the practice activities given to them by the teacher.

Another type of reorganized class that can be quite beneficial for correcting reading problems is the nongraded arrangement. In Portsmouth, Virginia, a nongraded program uses reading as one of the key elements to determine progress. A series of tasks in reading must be accomplished by each student. When a student experiences difficulty, the teacher becomes aware rather quickly of the difficulty because of the specifically defined tasks. Corrective measures can be administered without too much difficulty. The need for individualized small group instruction is evident in this type of program, and organizational arrangements within the classroom must be made to accomplish it. There is no set pattern for classroom organization in the Portsmouth program except that small-group activity is promoted in in-service training programs and is usually assured in the classroom, for the classroom teacher is given one dozen each of three different basic tests. This makes whole-group instruction from one textbook rather difficult. The variety of texts also recognizes the fact that within the series of tasks to be accomplished there will still be considerable variance on the part of the students.

Flint, Michigan, has a nongraded approach to reading and adds this variable: A reading teacher goes from room to room on a regular schedule and works with a maximum of six children at a time, especially helping those who are in difficulty and helping the classroom teacher set up corrective activities for those who are experiencing difficulty in reading. Within a given room, however, a variety of ages will occur, since the Flint schools are arranged on an ungraded primary and an ungraded intermediate organizational plan.

At the high school level, the most frequently reported kind of corrective activity falls into two categories: (1) a reading laboratory in which children come from various classrooms and report on a regular basis to a reading teacher,[3] (2) a form of team teaching where a team of teachers uses one of their members as a corrective reading teacher. This kind of teaching can be found in Oakland, California, Denver, Colorado, and Phoenix, Arizona. In Oakland, the team consists of three teachers and an aide. One of the teachers uses almost all of his instructional time for corrective activities, and his room is especially equipped for reading activities. The teacher aide assists in the collection of data and in keeping folders and test information in order. The other two teachers, who conduct English classes both on a whole-group and small-group basis, make observations about youngsters who seem to be having difficulty, and participate in the recommendation and survey testing of the children in their class who can benefit from corrective activity in reading.

In Phoenix, three large multiuse rooms were remodeled to form a language learning center. The center contains room for four English classes, four reading classes, and a central office.

The reading classrooms are equipped with materials for diagnosing reading deficiencies and teaching reading competencies with a wide variety of approaches and motivational devices, such as tape recorders, record players, and overhead projectors. Since four English classes and four reading classes meet around this learning center during each period of the day, a student may be moved from group to group at any time according to his particular needs. This regrouping of students is accomplished on the basis of observation by the eight teachers involved in the program. The eight teachers meet as a team not only to plan general instructional strategy but also to discuss the ways that the English teachers and the reading teachers can work cooperatively to give the entire group of students the best learning experience. Once again, each teacher is conscious of possible reading problems so that corrective techniques can be applied almost immediately.

Stimulating Poor High School Readers--Programs to improve reading in high schools are less frequent than are elementary programs. This is particularly true of classroom programs. One reason for this is that secondary teachers often have limited, if any, training or experience in teaching reading skills. Consequently, they may not be able either to recognize or to correct reading skill difficulties in their students. They may not be able to determine students' reading levels or to differentiate between the levels at which students read and the level of reading required for mastery of subject area materials.

3/ This is not typically what is meant by correction in the classroom and so does not fit the context of this monograph.

Fortunately, this situation is slowly changing. Increased community interest in reading programs and increased availability of funds to finance them have made more secondary programs possible. Secondary teachers have become aware of the need for reading instruction in their classrooms and are experimenting with a number of new ideas for building reading skills. Many secondary teachers are taking courses which enable them to deal with the reading difficulties of their students.

San Francisco has made a concerted attempt to get subject matter teachers in high schools interested in the problems of reading. For example, history teachers in one project have half of their classes with students who are poor readers. The subject is still history but new techniques are used. One class, for instance, might have a teacher-devised crossword puzzle on a film they have just seen about the American Revolution. Finding commercial materials easy enough for the students to read is frequently a problem.

In a Los Angeles project, junior high school students who are poor readers--in this case defined as two years below grade level in reading--are in a core program where they are taught reading, math, and social studies by teachers who have had training in reading. Classes are kept small and many audiovisual devices are used to capture the students' interests. Since material was scarce for such a project, the teachers have developed games, slides, pictures for overhead projectors, and tapes to teach their subjects to the poor readers.

Sometimes a simple idea works. A seventh-grade teacher in Tulsa, Oklahoma, accidentally stumbled on an answer to the dilemma of whether children are poor readers because they don't read or whether they don't read because they are poor readers. The teacher used a proverb one day to illustrate something she was talking about. The students suggested they look for other proverbs. Bringing in newspaper clippings and using stories they heard on the radio or television, the students showed great ingenuity in using old proverbs to talk about current events. The teacher thought the enthusiasm would last about a week, but the students never tired of it. An immediate result was increased use of oral language in class which, in turn, led to more reading.

The Reading Aids Program in San Bernardino, California, is based on the premise that every teacher is responsible, in some measure, for the teaching of reading. Knowing that junior high school teachers have little training in the teaching of reading, kits were prepared for each of ten subject areas. The kits, with detailed instructions on their use, include tapes, acetates, worksheets, and evaluation sheets. Subject matter of the ten kits is related to classroom instruction and deals with such topics as vocabulary, meaningful reading, dictionary usage, study skills, and word analysis skills. The assumption is that the teacher knows the subject matter but not how to present it for poor readers. The materials in the kit are designed to help with the presentation. Nine teachers worked for one summer to prepare the ten kits.

Several schools such as Cleveland, Ohio, have programs to discourage high school students from dropping out. One way of doing this is to place reading instruction in a large time block with social studies, in which part of the time is spent in reading skills instruction and part in studying multi-level content materials especially selected for the program. The content materials are vocationally oriented, giving students information about occupations and helping them to fit their interests and abilities into possible occupational areas. Reading instruction deals with skill building, emphasizing the need for basic skill mastery as a preface to vocational success.

In those schools where there is a school library, the librarian can be of great help to the classroom teacher in providing books and other supplementary materials that will capitalize on the interests of students. In some cities, the public libraries will also help.

Working With Individuals to Correct Reading Problems--Program structures often give the impression that most of the corrective activity can be accomplished with large or small groups. To some extent this is true, for classroom correction is aimed at identifying the gross skill deficiencies of children and of making efficient use of groups where that is possible in order to correct deficiency. Increasing emphasis, however, is being placed upon individual attention to even within groups where it is imperative that a teacher develop an individual profile for those who are having difficulty. We have discovered some highly successful ways of organizing for individual correction and report those techniques in the following paragraph.

Correcting Individual Problems--In order to correct the gross skill deficiencies of a reader, the classroom teacher must be aware of his reading levels, interests, and personal adjustments. Informal reading inventories and standardized survey and diagnostic tests are commonly used methods for determining reading levels. Interests and personal adjustment characteristics can be discovered by observing children during class activities, interviewing them, and asking them to complete interest inventories. The child's self-esteem, so often damaged by failure in reading, improves with his recognition that the teacher has set up an individual program for him.

Planning Structure and Organization of Daily Program

Usually, several children in the classroom will be involved in the corrective program on a rather regular basis. The teacher should set up routines for these children and for any others who may become involved in corrective activity on an occasional basis. Once the teacher has decided who is going to participate in the corrective reading program, he can make the necessary classroom and time adjustments to carry out the program. Here are some hints for scheduling that might be helpful:

- A planning period with the children should be provided for each day. During this time the planning serves a dual purpose. It motivates the children, enticing them to the activities which lie ahead, and also informs the class as a whole of the activities for which to prepare. Included in this planning period should be--

(a) Discussion of who needs to select new materials and when they will do it. During this time the teacher can show new materials, activities, books, magazines, etc.

(b) Discussion and planning of who will be working alone and with others, so that the room can be properly arranged and supplies provided. Plan independent reading activities.

(c) Discussion and solving (if possible) of any pertinent problems concerning routine, such as problems with traffic around book shelves, etc.

(d) Arrangements for conferences, consultations, and individual assignments. Following this planning, each child should know exactly what he is to do during the reading period. Activities can be listed on a chart for easy review.

- A sharing period may be included. Some teachers find it quite helpful to have problem readers briefly discuss what they have learned, thereby letting all problem readers know that they are not the only ones having trouble. The teacher may want to schedule this once a week.

- A block of time must be allotted for the self-selection of books. The purpose of this is again to emphasize the individuality of the corrective program. Students may have some time during corrective activity to work independently while the teacher holds conferences with others, or they may simply use the self-selected books during other times of the day. An important factor in the self-selection period, however, is to have a number of books available with reading levels at which students can read independently.

- An evaluation period or summary period should be provided so that the children and the teachers can record their daily progress in their own files. This also provides the opportunity to identify future needs and perhaps to informally appraise the activities for that day.

Planning for and during all these periods is essential to alleviate many behavioral problems that could arise. The exact character and nature of the teaching schedule, however, will depend entirely upon the needs of the children and the purposes of instruction.

Conferences

Individual conferences with each youngster are the high points in the corrective reading program. A one-to-one relationship of teacher and child is the best way to meet individual differences.

Conferences can be initiated in the first year, using an individualized language experience story approach for a beginning. As the children begin to read books, conferences can be used to take a representative sample of the child's reading. These sessions should be utilized also for individual instruction. The ways of organizing these sessions are numerous, yet there are some general principles and procedures which can be followed for effective conferences.

1. Establish a time limit--not necessarily for rigid enforcement, but as a general goal for the teacher. Lengthy comprehensive conferences might be necessary at first to help initiate the program. An often-suggested time limit is from 3 to 10 minutes, averaging 5 minutes per child. Some conferences will demand more time however.

2. Some youngsters might confer with the teacher daily, while others might require only four or five conferences per month.

3. The conferences can be on a voluntary basis, with the youngsters signing up on a schedule for their time, or they can be informally arranged: "Who needs to see me today?" They can also be set up on a routine basis, using an established cycle of conferences which rotates.

4. Teachers and children can schedule their conferences during the planning period or, if a sign-up sheet is provided, anytime during the day.

5. The conference with individual children should be relaxed, yet purposeful. This is a time to gain information, share, engage in personalized teaching, evaluate and plan for the next step in reading. It should be a warm, intimate time for the teacher and the child. During the conference the teacher should--

   - Discuss with the child the choice of books being read.

   - Discover the child's feelings toward the book.

   - Hear the child read orally.

   - Evaluate and work on deriving word meanings.

   - Evaluate word attack skills and work on those needing improvement.

   - Work on development of specific skills.

- Check on children's understanding of specific passages or sections of the book.

- Make assignments or plans to develop a specific skill.

- Make assignments or plans to reinforce a specific skill.

6. The individual conference should leave the child eager and ready for the next conference. Praise or some positive comment concerning the child's progress should be included, especially at the end of the conference.

7. Occasionally, it might be convenient or appropriate to group from two to five children together. This can be done if a few students read the same book at the same time. Ideas and interpretations can be shared in a group conference arrangement. Some teachers suggest a small group conference plan for primary children. In this arrangement, the children gather around the teacher, each reading his own self-selected book at his own rate. One child at a time from this group then receives individual reading guidance from the teacher for a few minutes. That child becomes a member of the group again while the teacher gives her attention to another member of the same group for a short period of time. This continues until everyone in the group has conferred with the teacher or until the reading period is over. The children may begin as a group all at the same time, or may voluntarily come and go from the group.

Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping is an important part of any instructional program. In a classroom correction program, where many activities go on at one time, it becomes especially important if the program is to run smoothly and if children's needs are to be served. Both teacher and children can be involved in this task with the teacher concentrating on evaluation of progress and needs and the children concentrating on recording tasks completed.

The teacher should keep detailed records which will give him a general picture of the child--his interests, abilities, and attitudes. This would include the results of mental tests, reading tests of achievement and capacity, and results of oral reading tests. The physical and mental health of a child should also be noted. Cumulative record information such as the child's interests, strengths, and limitations is helpful as well. In this more specific record, approaches and techniques found to be effective when working with the youngster should be recorded along with notations regarding specific needs and types of help needed and given.

Less formal records might include checksheets of dates when individual conferences are held, summaries of needs of individuals as shown through conferences or through observation during class activities, and notations of general class needs.

A checklist of conference dates might contain a list of children in the class and notations of dates on which conferences are held.

Conference Schedule

Name	Conference Number							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Aaron, John	9/21	4/28						
2. Harris, June	9/22	9/25	9/29					
3. Smith, Regina								

A glance at such a record will help the teacher plan individual conferences and give him an idea of the amount of time he needs to spend in conferences in a given day or week.

The teacher should take careful notes during an individual conference. The recordkeeping system used by the teacher should be simple yet functional --recording the overall skills, attitudes, and understandings of the child. Record cards, checklists, or a looseleaf notebook can be used effectively. Notes recorded are valuable in planning for the next conference and for group work. The teacher might use a form such as that reproduced below for keeping track of progress and further need.

Name					
Book Title	Grade Level	Skill Development	Analysis Difficulty	Ability	Assignment

After conferences have been held it is often helpful to go back over the notes recorded and summarize the needs revealed. This summary could take a form like the following:

Group work with:

Initial consonants	Oral Reading
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

Individual work:

1. J. Jones--reading for details
2.
3.
4.

Regardless of the particular forms used in recordkeeping, the procedures should be kept as simple as possible. Using a code or a personal shorthand also helps in recording during the conference. The records need note not only reading skills or needs but also such areas as spelling or science.

RecordKeeping by the Child

The records that each child keeps enable him to follow his own reading progress. The youngsters readily respond to this responsibility, and their records prove to be a valuable aid during individual conferences as they provide the teacher with insight into each child's reading pattern.

Recordkeeping must not be overemphasized; however, the children should record every book they read in their personal files. Simplicity is the key in children's records. These records should not be so demanding that a child would prefer not to read, yet they should allow for personal reactions. Some authorities suggest that the *forms* of children's records be changed frequently. Their records for the most part should record what and how many books were read and the specific skill tasks completed.

Ways for children to record their reading are many and varied. Some suggestions are--

- Make scrapbooks of illustrations and summaries of stories.

- Make charts displaying various types of material read.

- Make a "collection box" of "souvenirs" from good stories--such as new words learned, funny incidents, etc.

- Make charts to evaluate the stories read according to criteria set by the class.

- At the beginning of a program, use a weekly reading survey in which the child accounts for the number of pages read each day, the approximate time spent browsing, reading books, newspapers, etc. This helps "time wasters" get into the reading habit.

. Put each child's name on a divider in a file box. Cards are available with categories of books listed on them (fiction, history, science, biography, humor, animal stories, poetry, newspaper, magazine). As the child completes a book he fills out the card with the name of the book, author, date finished, identification of important characters, and a sentence or two about the plot, new words, and meanings. The card is filed behind his divider.

Name: Date Fiction

Title:

Author:

Main characters:

If preferred, summaries of this type could be done on record sheets for a looseleaf folder.

Skill Development

The success of a youngster learning to read depends primarily on how effectively he learns the essential reading skills. The teaching of skills in the primary grades is not, however, the main goal. The purpose of teaching skills is to help the child read better and enjoy reading. The extent to which youngsters read on their own, independently, indicates the success of instruction.

Skill getting is an internal, active, and individual process. The procedure involves meeting the skill, learning what it is and does, practicing the skill by performing it, succeeding, or further correcting the skill until success is evidenced.

The teaching of skills should not be isolated from the reading act itself. For this reason most of the skill instruction in individualized reading is handled in individual conferences when the child shows a need for it. Reading specialists differ in their opinions of the proper sequence of skill development. By checking through various basal textbook manuals a teacher can discover the variety of these opinions. It might be helpful, though, for the teacher to have at least one basal textbook manual on hand to use as a guide in developing skills. A list of specific reading skills and sample activities for their developing are discussed in the next chapter. A checklist should be kept in the records of each child so that, as a skill is mastered, the teacher can check it off the list and proceed to others.

Skill Evaluation

In evaluating whether skills have been acquired, and the progress of the child, one should acquire as much information as possible prior to making any judgment. Infommation may be gained in many ways--formally as well as informally.

Children may be evaluated through an analysis of--

- Informal and standardized test results
- Checklists of skills (see sample checklists in following section)
- Inventories of the child's needs
- Child's oral reading
- Teacher observations of child's attitudes, interests, and purposes for reading, and how much the child rdads
- Teacher-pupil conference records
- Child's self-evaluation
- Child's independent reading record
- Tape recordings of the child's reading early in the year as compared to subsequent tapes noting progress.

Conclusion

An individualized corrective reading program is flexible by nature. There is no step-by-step program fixed for each school day. Each child is an individual, with individual problems, and requires an individualized method of instruction. Variety in both methods and materials is inherent in this personalized plan. The variety of ideas presented here serves only to supplement the ideas that an individual teacher may have. The teacher should consider this as a flexible guide that can be adapted to any system of reading instruction.

Classroom Techniques for Correcting Specific Problems

Once the teacher has identified a specific reading problem and has organized his classroom so that he can conduct corrective activities, he should start to treat the problem. Adequate treatment demands an adequate supply of materials, the application of appropriate corrective techniques, and, naturally, that which underlies all of it, appropriate training for the teacher.

Teachers have many handicaps when it comes to reading instruction. First of all, their own training may have been inadequate, Then, too often they are given the job without being given the tools. Materials are skimpy, classes are crowded, help is scarce, and administrators do not always supply the needed support. Reading consultants sometimes can be seen by appointment only, so that the moment when specific help is needed slips past. However, ways are being found to face these specific handicaps.

Teacher Preparation

Most graduates in elementary education have had more training in teaching music, art, and physical education than they have had in the teaching of reading (Austin, 1961, p. 23). Secondary school teachers might very well have had no training in the teaching of reading or even in the recognition of reading difficulties.

This may be surprising in view of the fact that elementary school teachers spend a great deal of time in the teaching of reading, and secondary school teachers also are vitally concerned with reading in various content areas. These realities of deficiency must be faced by adjusting pre-service and in-service training.

To make up for deficiencies in background, teachers have several avenues open--course work, reading professional books, experience in a reading laboratory or clinic, and in-service training. More and more schools are providing in-service training and some are even paying teachers by means of released time during the school day or by giving them additional money for participating in in-service training after school or on Saturdays. Teachers and teacher organizations should pursue ways of obtaining needed in-service experience so that a more effective job in correction of reading problems can be accomplished.

In communities with colleges, school systems may often cooperate with college authorities in offering special courses useful to teachers of reading. In *San Diego, California,* several college level courses have been devised to help with the teaching of reading. Some are given in the public schools so the teachers do not have far to travel. Such courses can be tailored to meet the problems of a specific school or a specific district. For example, if a school has a large proportion of children for whom English is a second language, the course could concentrate on how to teach reading to them. There are correction problems that continue throughout the teaching process of this group of children.

Those communities which do not have colleges can often host off-campus courses from State universities or teachers colleges. This is especially beneficial where teachers can commute from other towns or school districts. In this way, teachers from a number of school systems can benefit from courses in teaching reading which, otherwise, would be out of their reach.

In most instances, however, the school system will want to devise training programs that are indigenous to the school district. A special curriculum for in-service training programs can be developed by a committee of teachers and supervisors or by the supervisory staff. Both local school people and outside consultants can then present demonstrations and lead discussions that will arrive at the kind of training and experience desirable. With specific local goals in mind, schools often conduct extended in-service programs on Saturdays or during the summer. In *Terre Haute, Indiana,* teachers may attend evening or Saturday workshop sessions on the educational problems of disadvantaged children. Teachers in *Tuscaloosa, Alabama,* attend a concentrated series of weekly meetings in the spring and a six-week summer workshop. Focus on the program is on the upgrading of all reading instruction, particularly in schools which have many children from disadvantaged homes. The specific techniques demonstrated illustrate where problems are likely to arise in the teaching of reading and what the specific techniques are that will be beneficial in overcoming those problems.

Interest in in-service training can be increased by offering college credit. *Kenmore, New York,* has an in-service program in which elementary teachers attend a series of nine evening meetings during a semester and receive one university credit. Lectures by well-known reading specialists are supplemented by discussions in individual schools in the system. Teachers engage in projects concerned with methods used in correcting reading problems in their own classrooms. Their ideas, summaries of the meetings, and lists of materials recommended for classroom use are collected in an idea exchange booklet which is distributed to all who complete the course.

Relieving teachers of classroom duties for in-service training is a third means of planning successful programs. *Buffalo, New York,* maintains a Reading Center for improving the teaching of reading through in-service training. The Center's staff of reading consultants conducts three types of in-service programs at the Center--a trainee program, workshops, and demonstrations. The trainee program is the most intensive. Each school term four classroom teachers become trainees, attending lectures and discussion sections and observing the administration of reading analysis. After several weeks of training the trainees take over the teaching of small groups of children who come to the Center for corrective work. At the end of the term the trainees return to their classrooms. Workshops, given after school one day a week for five weeks, are conducted at the Center for beginning and experienced teachers at different levels. All district public school teachers are invited. Demonstration classes are taught by Center consultants. Each term, two elementary classes spend every morning at the Center for four weeks. The trainees and other district teachers observe these classes. The consultants has a conference with observers preceding and following the observations.

Dougherty County, Georgia, is another school system which releases teachers from classroom duties for in-service training in reading. Each of fourteen schools releases one teacher at a time for six-month training sessions at the county's Reading Clinic in Albany. The first four to six weeks are spent in discussion with psychologists, professors, an optometrist, and clinicians in preparing for case work. Throughout the training the theory and practice of diagnosis and remedial instruction are well integrated. After the initial training, teachers are assigned split day schedules--half working mornings and half afternoons--with corrective and remedial cases. The teachers spend the other half day in their respective schools teaching developmental and remedial reading classes and acting as resource teachers.

Teachers may also use some of the excellent books that are available on corrective reading in the classroom, such as *Diagnostic Teaching of Reading* by Ruth Strang, *The Teachers Guide for Remedial Reading* by Kottmeyer, *Corrective and Remedial Teaching* by Otto and McMenemy. Reading specialists and consultants can also be of help to teachers and administrators in finding and recommending especially helpful books for special needs. Groups of teachers interested in this problem could group themselves into discussion meetings in order to ecourage each other to read in this area.

Specific Reading Skills

Successful techniques for correcting reading difficulty appear to have three common characteristics:

1. Teachers have definite goals of instruction in mind.

2. Reading is associated with pupil experience.

3. Planned sequential skill development is provided.

Corrective teachniques vary widely. No good teacher uses only one technique. A multiple approach to teaching reading benefits the students with their varying abilities and varying styles of learning.

The goals that a teacher sets may be related to word recognition, such as identifying words that begin with the consonant digraph *ch,* or they may be related to such less easily measured things as lack of experience, lack of motivation to learn, or lack of concepts to deal with the reading at hand.

One of the techniques that classroom teachers in growing numbers are using, especially where there is evidence of some cultural disadvantagement, is the technique known as the language experience approach. This technique takes advantage of what the child knows in order to get him to talk and then to interest him in reading about what has already captured his interest.

Probably the simplest form of language experience is the show-and-tell period widely used in the elementary schools. The child brings something to class that he has found or seen and tells the class about it. The purpose is two-fold: to make the child more observant, and to get him talking in a way that will interest his peers. The class ordinarily will join in a discussion of the subjects brought up. For many children, a show-and-tell experience will be the first time they have had an audience interested in what they have to say. They find out that language is a tool to capture the attention of others, that it is something useful.

Children from limited or deprived backgrounds--and this, by no means, describes only the poor--have little to talk about. The field trip has become a prime instrument to extend the language experiences of these children.

Field trips require a great deal of planning if they are to be more than outings. *San Francisco* is an example of a school system that has made the field trip a true teaching device.

Sites for field trips are carefully chosen to fit into the curriculum, with one class concentrating on becoming acquainted with the city, another with occupational possibilities, another with cultural offerings, and still another with nature study. Teachers, administrators, and reading specialists plan the trips by visiting selected sites before the children do. They prepare for the visits by securing reinforcement materials from the audiovisual department and school library, and by arranging for resource speakers to tell the children more about the places to be visited. Children are allowed to express choices of places they want to visit and follow up their field trips with essays, plays, language experience charts, or scrapbooks telling of their experiences. Parents are invited to accompany children on the field trips in an effort to enlist their interest in their children's learning activities. This also provides the teacher with further supervision for the group and is often educational for the parents as well as for the children.

Field trips are effective. Children acquire a common set of experiences about which they can converse; they become more aware of things around them as they develop observational powers. Vocabularies grow. Use of color, details, and arrangement in art increases. Social skills and attitudes improve.

Activities To Teach Specific Reading Skills

Classroom teachers often want to know how to correct a specific skill. An essential feature in specific diagnosis and correction is to have established in one's mind a rather precise sequence of reading skills against which a student may be evaluated, and through which the teacher can encourage the student to proceed. A sample of such a list of skills is given below.

Peceptual Reading Skills

Auditory Skills

- Matching rhyming words
- Identifying consonant sounds
- Identifying vowel sounds
- Hearing word variants
- Recognizing syllable length
- Listening for accent

Visual Skills

- Noticing likenesses and differences
- Noticing differences in upper and lower case and between letters
- Increasing eye-span
- Developing spacial discrimination

Motor Skills

- Developing left-right eye movement
- Developing hand-eye coordination
- Developing motor awareness and coordination

Word Identification Skills

Sight Vocabulary

Phonic Analysis Skills

- Recognizing consonant sounds
- Recognizing consonant blends
- Recognizing consonant digraphs
- Recognizing vowel sounds
- Recognizing vowel diphthongs
- Recognizing vowel digraphs

Structural Analysis Skills

- Recognizing affixes
- Recognizing compound words
- Recognizing roots
- Recognizing contractions

Context Clue Skills

- Using definition clues
- Using experience clues
- Using comparison clues
- Using synonym clues
- Using familiar expression clues
- Using summary clues
- Using reflection of mood clues

Syllabication Skills

- Recognizing syllables
- Using syllabication generalizations
- Recognizing accent

Comprehension Skills

Matching words and pictures
Recognizing meaningful phonograms
Matching definitions and word symbols
Recognizing antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms
Seeing literal and interpretive meanings
Using context clues
Recognizing meaning in larger units--sentence, passage, chapter
Recognizing main idea and supporting detail
Recognizing sequence
Making generalizations and conclusions
Following directions

Comprehension Rate

Using correct left-right eye movement
Using little or no regression
Using little or no vocalizing or subvocalizing
Using correct phrasing to read
Adjusting rate to purpose
Rapid recognition of sight vocabulary
Using various word attack techniques meeting his own needs

Oral Reading

Adjusting rate to purpose
Using phrasing to read
Using sufficient eye-voice span to read
Using pleasing pitch and volume
Enunciating correctly
Pronouncing correctly
Using punctuation correctly
Being a relaxed reader

Study Skills

Organizational Skills

- Arranging in alphabetical order
- Interpreting diacritical marks, symbols, and abbreviations
- Using the table of contents
- Taking good notes
- Using the index
- Verifying statements
- Developing a sense of sequence
- Using summarizing and outlining
- Synthesizing materials from several sources
- Organizing and reporting information

Library Skills

- Knowing the arrangement of the library
- Using the card catalogue
- Using the vertical files
- Using the dictionary and glossary
- Using the encyclopedia
- Using the atlas
- Using the *Reader's Guide*

Interpretation Skills

- Using pictures for information
- Interpreting graphs
- Interpreting diagrams
- Using time lines
- Interpreting maps

Interpretation and Appreciation Reading Skills

- Inferring and concluding
- Recognizing the author's purpose
- Recognizing the difference between fact and opinion
- Recognizing the mood of the story
- Recognizing figurative language
- Seeing cause and effect relationships
- Knowing literary styles

In many instances, teachers will have to create their own exercises in order to give individual instruction in a specific skill. Teachers should not have to create exercises for all students, however, as many fine instructional materials are available in most of these areas. Given below are some samples of the kinds of activities that can be used to teach some of the specific skills listed above. For a more complete picture of what can be done, refer to the fourth monograph in this series entitled *Treating Reading Disabilities--The Reading Specialist's Role.*

Auditory Skills--Matching Rhyming Words

On the left side of the page, display pictures of objects which exemplify the sound being taught; on the right side, display pictures of rhyming words. The children are to draw a line to the rhyming object. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Auditory Skills--Identifying Consonant Sounds

Each child receives a worksheet with a playground scene on it. Many objects are displayed in the picture; most of the objects start with initial consonant sounds already studied. With a red pencil, all the objects beginning with_____are marked. With a blue pencil all the objects beginning with______ are marked. Only two or three sounds should be tested at once; however, the picture can be used again to test other sounds. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Auditory Skills--Identifying Vowel Sounds

The children skim their readers for words that fit into certain categories established by the teacher. The categories are determined by the vowel sound the teacher wants to stress, for example, the long sound___; the short sound of ___; the r-controlled sound of ___. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Auditory Skills--Recognizing Syllable Length

Give a list of mixed words containing one, two, and three syllable words. The children are to unscramble the words and put them into three columns, according to the number of syllables per word. Then they are to label the columns one-, two-, and three-syllable words. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the side of a normal class.

Visual Skills--Noticing Likenesses and Differences

On a worksheet with pairs of similar and often confused words, as the teacher reads sentences containing the words the children are to underline the correct word from the pair. Example: quiet-quite, deer-dear, palace-place, throat-throne. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Visual Skills--Developing Special Discrimination Horizontal Sequence

Display three objects to the children and name each as the first, next, and last object. Using three different objects, have them locate the first, next and last objects from left to right. This involves discussion or a similar activity for a small group.

Motor Skills--Developing Hand-Eye Coordination

Some developmental activities which will enhance visual-motor coordination are the following: cutting, painting, pasting, tracing, finger games, coloring, model making, bead stringing, and block building. This involves discussion or similar activity for a smaller group.

Sight Vocabulary--Developing Sight Vocabulary

This game is played like Bingo. Words are written in columns and rows. The children cover the words pronounced by the teacher; and the first child to completely cover a column or row is the winner.

Structural Analysis--Recognizing Affixes

After reviewing rules about plurals, present the children with a list of representative nouns. The children are to write the root word next to the given plural, then state in their own words the rule governing that root word and its plural. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Context Clues--Using Context Clues

Present a short story of one paragraph with some words left out. The children are to read each sentence and complete it with their own words or those from a given list. Different types of context clues may be exhibited in each sentence. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Syllabication Generalizations--Using Syllabication Generalizations

After several syllabication generalizations have been studied or reviewed, present a list of words for the child to divide. Have him letter the divided word with the correct rule governing its division. This diagnostic and correctional procedure is designed for an individual.

Comprehension--Matching Definitions and Word Symbols

Prepare a worksheet on which children must match the word and its definition. The choice of words and definitions depends on the grade level of the group. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Comprehension--Seeing Literal and Interpretive Meanings

Prepare questions to be presented before the students read. These questions should provoke thought while reading. Some sample questions which enhance interpretation are: "What did he mean by_____?" "Do you think that this should have happened?" "What makes this a good example of_______(some literary style)?" "Compare these two characters." "Which character displayed the most courage?" and so on. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Comprehension Skills--Recognizing Main Idea and Supporting Detail

After the children have read a story, the teacher writes sentences on the board that show main ideas and detail from the reading. Through discussion the children distinguish which are the main ideas and which are the supporting details. Finally, each child arranges on a sheet of paper the main ideas in their proper sequence. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Comprehension--Following Directions

Present a worksheet where directions vary according to topics that were studied in each subject for the past week. The list of directions is to be completed but done in fun. Some ideas for directions are as follows:

Write the page number that tells where ants get their food. (Science)
Trace a picture of an ant. (Science)
Copy the definition of a verb. (English)
Given an example of a verb used in a sentence. (English)
From your notebook, copy three new words learned this week in Spanish.
Draw a Pilgrim boy or girl. (Social Studies)
State three reasons why we still observe Thanksgiving. (Social Studies)

This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Comprehension Rate--Using Little or No Regressions

Using a cover card, the child is to read from left to right across a page. As he reads, he uses a cover card to block out what has been read. This sample is a diagnostic and correctional procedure designed for an individual.

Comprehension Rate--Adjusting to Purpose

Questions involving material found in the index, table of contents, and chapter headings make good material to scan for answers. This correctional procedure can usually be found in worksheets and can be used by a group the size of a normal class.

Oral Reading Skills--Enunciating Correctly

Study word endings, such as ing, d, and t. Practice words on flashcards can be used for individual or class help:

chattering
coming
fishing
talking
stirring
falling
blowing
making
growling
pushing

brought
feed
dived
crept
spent
listened
chattered
watched
rattled
waited

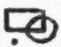
quiet
slid
caught
carried
tonight
right
around
tugged
that
pulled

This generally involves discussion or similar activity in a smaller group.

Auditory and Visual Training

Many children have auditory or visual discrimination problems which adversely affect their ability to read. The classroom teacher can recognize some of these problems by observing children's behavior in the classroom.

Poor word recognition, narrow attention span, reversals, and word-by-word reading, especially if coupled with bloodshot, swollen, or teary eyes, complaints of dizziness, blurred vision, or soreness, may be symptoms of visual difficulty. Difficulties in sound differentiations, following spoken directions, or classroom inattentiveness may indicate hearing or auditory discrimination problems. The teacher, after observing such behavior, should make an informal diagnosis of auditory and visual discrimination and follow up with specific treatment. If diagnosis and treatment in the classroom do not prove successful, or if the problem appears too severe for classroom handling, the teacher should refer the child to a specialist for help.

Classroom diagnosis of auditory and visual discrimination problems can be done through teacher-devised tests or formal tests. To test auditory discrimination, a teacher might ask a child to listen to a series of words (e.g., bat, bet, bit, but) and describe likenesses or differences in the words (e.g., change in middle vowel). The *Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test* includes exercises similar to the example given and can be administered easily by the classroom teacher. In testing visual discrimination, the teacher might ask a child to choose two like figures from a series (e.g., △ ▭ O △) or ask him to reproduce a figure himself (e.g., ). This kind of exercise appears in reading readiness tests and in the *Frostig Visual Perception Test* which, like the *Wepman*, can be administered in the classroom.

Once diagnosis of auditory or visual discrimination problems has been made, the classroom teacher can devise exercises similar to the test items to help correct problems. Such exercises should be based on diagnostic findings and should concentrate on developing skills through exercises similar to those used in diagnosis.

Given below are some methods for treating auditory and visual problems.

- Many classrooms now have listening posts or corners where the children can listen to tapes or records to improve their auditory perception. The use of pictures, films, and filmstrips can be incorporated in classroom teaching to improve visual perception.

- Filmstrips may be used to teach specific skills. For example, to teach time filmstrips, the class might be shown a single frame of a filmstrip they saw the day before. The teacher then asks the class to tell what happened just before and just after that picture.

- Games may be used for both visual and auditory perception. Many of these are devised by teachers with specific goals in mind. For example, pictures are shown of various objects whose only relationship might be that they begin with the same consonant. The children who pick out the pictures and write down the words beginning with the same letter win the game.

- Controlled readers are used to improve eye movements. The speed of the machine is geared to the child's ability and gradually moved up so that he is forced to use fewer eye movements in order to keep up with the story.

- Many companies have now put stories on tapes. Teachers also can tell stories into tape machines and children themselves will dictate their own stories. Listening to these tapes and then answering questions about what they have heard will help improve listening skills.

The Language Improvement Project at the Fairlawn School in *Santa Barbara, California,* puts great emphasis on the development of listening skills. A listening center--consisting of a cart, twelve headsets, a phonograph, and a tape recorder--is rolled into the classroom and is ready for use. The Fairlawn listening centers are used in a number of ways by students: to listen to recorded stories from their textbooks, following along; to listen to teacher-made tapes, some of which may be dictated instructions for drill in specific skills; to record their oral reading, passing along the microphone in turn and then listening to their own performances; to make a group reading of a play; to record their experiences on a field trip; and to hear their own improvement by listening to tapes made six months earlier and comparing them with tapes of the same material recently made.

Teaching for Skills

Reading specialists and other resource teachers can help the classroom teacher by diagnosing the reading difficulties a student is having; demonstrating, through teaching classroom lessons or during in-service training, how to gear instruction to specific reading problems; and locating and demonstrating new materials and techniques.

In *San Francisco,* a special program was aimed at children needing help in reading. First, an informal reading inventory was devised to help teachers determine students' reading problems. Teachers were encouraged to use a multimedia approach--newspapers, trade books, magazines, filmstrips, radio and television programs, resource speakers, records, tape recordings, and field trips in order to "tune in" to students' interests in motivating them to read. Listening skills were emphasized through the exchange of verbal ideas, discussion, and reporting. Reading specialists singled out materials that would teach specific skills, such as phonics, blending, final consonants, time and space relationships, and correct use of prepositions.

Games introduce an element of fun into classroom work and are helpful in reinforcing specific skills. Both elementary and secondary students enjoy playing commercially developed word games in class. Card games, such as word rummy, and word bingo games provide fun and motivation for elementary school children. More advanced games can be used effectively in secondary classrooms with some adaptation by the teacher so that groups of students can play against one another.

In addition to commercially available games, teachers can devise game situations for classes. Young children might find three- or four-word cards on their chairs when they come into class. The children use these word cards to make sentences. Variations of anagrams, where letters are used to build and change words, can be effective with both elementary secondary students.

Telephoning each other on play phones can encourage the use of language as well as social skills. Elementary school children can build word collections by writing each new word on a card and filing it for later use in language experience charts. Secondary students can use the same method for building specific vocabularies for content area courses. Classification can be learned by finding newspaper and magazine stories that have to do with pets, cars, sports, or whatever interests a child most. Stories in trade books that concentrate on certain sounds a child is having trouble with can be used profitably in building needed understandings and skills.

Materials and Books

Selection of books and other materials for instructional and independent reading should be made with the children's interests and abilities in mind. As commercial materials and books become more varied and more helpful, the selection task of the teacher becomes more difficult. By consulting reading coordinators and using reference sources on children's literature, classroom teachers can become more familiar with the content and reading levels of children's books. School librarians can assist teachers by providing sources of information on new books.

There are a number of references which list books available for individual reading programs, and many of these are constantly updated to keep teachers and librarians acquainted with outstanding publications. The 1966 revision of *Good Reading for Poor Readers* by Spache discusses book choices for specific children and includes lists of books, workbooks, and games for use in individualized reading programs. H. W. Wilson's *Children's Catalog* is a reference tool. Published annually, it gives summaries of books in all fields, estimates their difficulty, and assesses their literary value. Another reference available through school librarians is *The Horn Book Magazine*, which is published bimonthly and contains reviews of outstanding children's books. Teachers can also consult such professional journals as *Elementary English* and the *English Journal* for information on new instructional materials for classroom use.

The school reading coordinator is a vital source of information on material for use in individualized reading programs. He investigates new materials as he receives information on them from publishers, and can relay this information to classroom and special reading teachers. He can also plan and demonstrate innovative materials for classroom teachers.

Still, teachers say, commercial materials are too few; they lack realism; they don't motivate the nonreader; they are geared for girls rather than boys; their vocabularies are too controlled or too extensive; the materials contain too few phonics practices; and they are unsuitable for independent reading programs. To overcome any or all of these deficiencies, teachers are creating their own materials. To surmount the problem of time to do this, teachers are sometimes released for a semester to work on a project, or they may devote a summer or evenings or weekends to creating their own teaching materials. More sharing of materials could be done, even of teacher-created materials.

Basal readers are often the only materials a teacher will use, and she may even ignore the accompanying teacher manual. Such resistance to change has to be overcome, either through the prodding of the reading coordinator or principal or through convincing demonstrations of materials during in-service sessions.

Further use of the audio-visual coordinator and the school librarian can be made to supplement materials for the classroom.

Testing and Grouping

One of the difficulties in both testing and grouping children is an attitudinal problem. Some teachers tend to believe that, once a class is tested or grouped, it will remain so for all time. Children, of course, do not stand still, and both testing and grouping have to be continuing processes.

Even in a homogeneous setting, all children do not read at the same level, nor do they have the same specific skill needs. But too often teachers tend to think that, once grouping has been done, there is no further need for individualized instruction. Even a homogeneous class will have as many as four or five levels of reading ability; and individual childrn, at whatever level, will have specific reading problems. For these reasons teachers should create "fluid" groups within the classes, giving children the help they need in specific areas without consigning them to one group for all reading instruction.

Classroom teachers, aware that differences in skill abilities do exist, can help to build these abilities. The first effort should be to use skill checklists, such as those shown on the following pages, to single out skill weaknesses in children. Classroom observations of behavior in reading situations and of attitudes shown toward reading can be of great help in determining areas of difficulty. Formal testing of areas of difficulty discovered in daily observation and measurement can follow as needed.

Knowing what tests to use and how to use them will come only from special effort and from experience. Reading coordinators and other reading specialists in the school can help classroom teachers to find and use standardized tests. A semester's in-service training could be planned around classroom diagnosis of reading difficulty.

Evaluation and Communication

Whatever techniques and materials are tried, they should be evaluated. Although teacher observation can be used to sense class enthusiasm for materials and techniques, discrete skills can best be tested by before-and-after evaluations. The school's reading coordinator or prinicpal should be involved in setting up methods of evaluation.

One way of evaluating children's progress is to use checklists to measure skill abilities. A careful examination of such checklists, coupled with teacher observations of class participation and results of reading tests, will give the

Word Attack Skills Checklist

Name ____________________

Grade ____________ Age ____________ Date ____________

Skill	Mastery		
	Poor	Average	Good
Recognition of basic sight vocabulary			
Ability to sound out new word			
Recognition of consonant sounds			
Recognition of vowel sounds			
Knowledge of syllabication			
Ability to analyze word structure			
Understanding of syllabication			
Understanding of root words			
Understanding of prefixes			
Understanding of suffixes			
Ability to use context clues			
Ability to supply synonyms and antonyms			
Ability to use a dictionary			

Comprehension Skills Checklists

Name____________________________

Grade__________________________ Age____________________ Date_____________

	Mastery		
Skill	Poor	Average	Good
Ability to understand meaning Word Sentences Paragraph			
Ability to recall main ideas			
Ability to give supporting ideas			
Ability to retell a story in sequence			
Ability to draw conclusions from given facts			
Ability to evaluate material read			
Ability to relate reading to experience			
Ability to use sources of information Table of contents Dictionary Maps Index			
Ability to make comparisons between two or more versions of a story			

Oral Reading Checklist

Name______________________________

Grade____________________ Age________________ Date_____________

Skill	Mastery		
	Poor	Average	Good
Good reading posture			
Ability to utilize word attack skills			
Sounding out new words			
Pronouncing words correctly			
Using structural parts			
Using combined methods of word attack			
Ability to phrase meaningfully			
Ability to recognize and use punctuation symbols			
Ability to identify main ideas			
Ability to read fluently and enunciate clearly			
Ability to convey meaning and feeling to listeners			

teacher a broad base upon which to evaluate progress.

Communicating with parents is also essential. In some cities, parents are actually involved in the curriculum by serving as paid or volunteer aides or tutors. In other places, parents accompany the children on field trips. Parental use of the school library is encouraged. Parents should be informed when a change in reading instruction is about to be tried, or they will have only the children's garbled versions of the experiment. Student demonstrations of methods and materials at PTA meetings and other parent gatherings help show what the schools are trying to do and how they are going about it.

San Bernardino, California, has a simple device to capture the interest of parents. The mothers and fathers are invited to the school to "hear your child on tape" or "see the pictures we took on our trip."

When home visits to explain the reading program have been undertaken, one of the clearest results has been a decrease in truancy--an indication of increased parental interest in the school.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Problems Remaining

With the increased recognition of the importance of reading and the changing school clientele--especially in big cities with large numbers of public school children from disadvantaged backgrounds--the problems of teaching reading at all levels seem to be increasing rather than decreasing. Reading problems, like crime, seem to increase as methods of diagnosing and reporting improve. Better diagnostic and teaching techniques seem to reveal more problems to be handled.

Nonetheless, some of the emerging problems show a hopeful pattern and point toward solutions. For example, it is becoming clear that all classroom teachers have become teachers of reading to some degree. The high school history teacher cannot teach history to nonreaders by his old methods. The fifth-grade teacher must know how to spot reading difficulties and either know how to overcome them herself or know where she can get some help for the child.

More individualized instruction is called for. Grouping solves nothing unless instructional techniques are adjusted to the needs of the reader. The glaring failure to do this is seen in ungraded classes which are identical in practice with graded classes. Individual reading programs are talked about more than they are put into operation. One of the chief problems is lack of books--a problem that can be solved with money, since the books are on the market.

New techniques and materials must be received with an open mind. Programed instruction, for example, is just beginning to come into its own. Its use has been impeded largely by teacher resistance.

Administrators must give support and attention to the improvement of reading. Only through them can classroom teachers obtain the materials they need and the school system hire the specialists who can construct and execute the services needed.

Finally, there has to be closer cooperation between the classroom teacher and others, such as the reading specialist, who are concerned with overcoming reading problems. It is impossible for either one to work effectively without the other.

The classroom teacher occupies the pivotal position in discovering reading difficulties, taking steps in the classroom to overcome them, referring children who need special help, providing gifted readers with individualized programs to enhance their skills and hold their interest, and, ultimately, preventing reading problems before they become critical and crippling.

Pitfalls To Be Avoided

Below are some of the more common mistakes that classroom teachers make in estimating their personal involvement with reading difficulties in the classroom.

Not my job--Since many classroom teachers do not have specific training to teach reading and are not called reading teachers, they feel that identification and correction of problems in reading do not fall to them. And, of course, in a specialized sense they are correct. Every teacher is not expected to have a specialized knowledge of the causes, diagnoses, and treatment of reading problems; but every teacher must realize that reading is the basic tool that students use and that no matter what the subject, there are peculiar elements that demand different approaches for reading intelligently. In that sense, every teacher is a teacher of reading. Elementary teachers are more specifically concerned with reading instruction and ordinarily have some minimal background in the teaching of reading skills.

Over-involvement in diagnosis--Because it is easier to test and diagnose without making conclusions, some classroom teachers become entangled in diagnosing problems and never do anything about them. The classroom teacher has to deal with the reality that he does not have the time or the tools to carry out a complete clinical diagnosis of the children in his classes. His diagnosis is a general practitioner's analysis of the gross faults that a child commits in reading, and he tries the most obvious kinds of treatments to overcome these faults.

Haphazard treatment--Classroom teachers often approach the treatment of reading problems in a haphazard way. Instead of asking themselves what skills a child must have in order to overcome the weakness they observe, they simply ask the child to do some practice activity that seems somewhat related to the observed weakness without trying to find out if other skills more basic and fundamental are also deficient. Then, too, some teachers proceed with a number of activities that they call corrective, not relating them to any sequence of reading skills or without evidence of progress. They simply give the child a programed instruction book, for example, and ask him to work in it--without noting progress or determining whether the child needs to go through all of the exercises contained in that program of materials.

Poor selection of materials--A teacher cannot possibly recall all of the good books and practice exercises available for corrective activity. It behooves him, therefore, to select a guide for the materials that he will use in corrective activities. Perhaps a book like Spache's *Good Reading for Poor Readers*, or books published by the Children's Book Council, or the reviews and lists published by the Children's Library Center at the University of Chicago would be beneficial for a classroom teacher to have in ordering and selecting materials for his classroom.

Lack of flexibility--There is probably no greater fault in teachers' attempts to correct reading problems than lack of flexibility. If the teacher is truly going to meet the individual needs of the children he must be flexible in his organizational structure, the materials, the techniques and even the methods that he uses to teach reading. No one method will solve the problems of every child, just as no one technique or set of materials will solve all the problems. It is necessary, therefore, for the teacher to be concerned with individual diagnosis and correction in the classroom and to be willing to make adjustments in finding appropriate materials and techniques for handling the child's problem.

Failure to make a referral--The classroom teacher should realize that he cannot solve or treat the problems of certain youngsters in his classroom. Then he should call in a specialist who has additional diagnostic tools and skills. There evidently are children who do not profit from the usual classroom instruction and must be turned over to a specialist who has the time and facilities to work with the child outside the classroom. Important to keep in mind in making this referral is that the classroom teacher should indicate what steps he has taken in the classroom to overcome the problem. Those steps give the specialist some indication of how to proceed, and not duplicate what has already been tried by the classroom teacher.

Steps for Action

To more effectively cope with reading problems in the classroom, a teacher should:

Stock up--Teachers must stock up on knowledge, causes, and symptoms of reading problems, and find specific activities to overcome them. The teacher must also stock up on materials to use as a handy reference for help. He should also collect a supply of checklists for use during daily classroom occupations. Checklists will give him a systematic way to observe the child's performance and make a better diagnosis and treatment of the problem.

Reorganize--There seems to be a lot of truth in the statement made by a reading director when he said, "Unless the classroom teacher reorganizes the class, he isn't likely to carry on individualized corrective activities." This monograph contains a number of suggestions for ways classrooms can be arranged for a more personal kind of diagnostic and corrective activity between teacher and student.

Treat the problem--After observation and evaluation have been made, the teacher must devide on what specific problem has to be treated. Unless the problem is isolated and put into specific terms, the chances are that treatment will not be direct enough for the student to benefit from the treatment.

Make a referral--When a teacher finds that his own diagnosis and treatment does not satisfactorily alleviate the problem, he should refer the child to the appropriate specialist.

Conclusion

The classroom teacher is the pivotal person in creating good readers and in correcting difficulties as they arise. In terms of corrective reading, he probably should consider himself as a general practitioner who must be aware of the symptoms of a variety of learning disorders, and must have at his disposal a variety of treatments for these disorders.

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No. 4-B

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No. 4-C

Techniques for Classroom Diagnosis of Reading Problems

Definition of Terms

In describing the various types of reading instruction, educators commonly use three terms: *developmental*, *remedial*, and *corrective*.

Developmental instruction. Developmental reading instruction has the following characteristics: (1) The instructional starting point is the level at which the child is presently reading; (2) the child proceeds at his own developmental rate of accomplishment; and (3) reading instruction is sequential, i.e., follows a definite sequence of skills and activities. Unfortunately, many educators use the term *developmental* instruction in a limited way, that is, as sequential instruction given on one level (the average level of the class) and at one rate (the class's average rate of learning.

Corrective instruction. Corrective reading instruction, in addition to the three characteristics of developmental instruction, has a more specific referent: instruction which is given to less severe cases of reading disability and is given by the classroom teacher in the classroom.

Remedial instruction. Remedial instruction includes the three characteristics of developmental instruction, but also refers more specifically to instruction which is given (1) to more severe cases of reading disability (children reading at least two years below capacity and/or grade level) and (2) by a reading specialist outside of the classroom--usually in a special classroom or a clinic.

Diagnostic Techniques Used in Classroom Correction

The classroom teacher's initial diagnosis of the child's reading difficulties has two major objectives: (1) To determine the child's instructional reading level, the level on which instruction should take place.

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Reading materials on a child's instructional level are neither too easy nor frustratingly difficult for him, yet these materials are just difficult enough so that the child can make reading progress under teacher guidance. (2) To determine the specific skills in which the child is deficient. Unless the diagnosis can determine particular skills, instruction may either give practice on skills already mastered or fail to give help on skills needed. Skill deficiencies must be pinpointed.

The classroom teacher can use the following techniques to diagnose a child's reading difficulties:

Group survey tests--Group survey tests normally provide measures of comprehension, vocabulary, and rate; but their main purpose is usually to provide a fairly adequate measure of the grade level at which a pupil reads. Hence, these tests can be used to reveal those children reading below grade level who may be candidates for either corrective or remedial instruction. Examples of group survey tests are the *Gates Primary Reading Tests* and the *Iowa Silent Reading Test.*

Those survey tests aimed primarily at determining a pupil's average reading grade also carry some diagnostic elements. There are other group tests, however, that are more analytical and more diagnostic than the group survey test. The purpose of these group diagnostic tests is to pinpoint skill deficiencies. Those that cover kindergarten through fourth grade usually measure reading readiness, visual and auditory discrimination, vocabulary, and story reading, or the comprehension of stories or paragraphs. Tests for grades four to eight usually measure word recognition, comprehension, vocabulary, rate, and word attack. In high school and college grades, the tests focus on measures of vocabulary, comprehension, rate and word attack. Some typical examples of group diagnostic tests are the Dvorak-Van Wagenen *Diagnostic Examination of Silent Reading Abilities* for grades four to five, six to nine, and ten to thirteen; the Bond-Balow-Hoyt *New Developmental Reading Tests* for primary reading; and the Bond-Clymer-Hoyt *Developmental Reading Tests* for intermediate grade reading.

Teacher-made tests --An effective and widely used technique for diagnosing reading dificiencies is the teacher-made test. The most commonly used are those which, because they are testing only one or two factors, are short, simple, and often made up on the spot, i.e., when the teacher is working with a pupil. For instance, if a teacher wants to know if Johnny knows how to blend the diagraph *ch* he simply asks him to pronounce several words which begin or end with *ch.* If he wants to test his literal comprehension (recall of facts) he asks Johnny to read several paragraphs and then asks him factual questions about the paragraph. If he wants to know if he can divide words into syllables, he gives him a number of words to syllabicate.

Informal reading inventory--The informal reading inventory, which the teacher gives to individual students, is a longer, more complex text. A carefully graded series of basal readers can be used to construct an informal reading inventory. Selections of 100 to 200 words are chosen from each book in the series, taking three selections from each book, one from the beginning, one from the middle, and one near the end. For each of these selections a few questions focusing on ideas and facts should be constructed and presented to the pupil after he has read the selection. The pupil should be started at a relatively easy level, reading orally to the teacher and then answering the comprehension questions based upon the content. If he is unable to handle the first selection given to him, he should be moved back an easier level. The child continues to read successively more difficult selections until the teacher determines his various reading levels and gains the appropriate diagnostic information. The levels are as follows:

Independent reading level

At this level the child can read comfortably without assistance from an outsider. It is the type of material that he would pick on his own and feel satisfied by his performance in reading it. As he reads orally he would probably make no more than one word pronunciation error out of 100 words and achieve a comprehension score of about 90 percent. Generally his oral reading would be conversational and well phrased. There would be little or no evidence of tension as he reads (Betts, 1946, p. 446).

Instructional level

This is the level at which pupils can make satisfactory progress under teacher guidance. The material, therefore, is challenging enough to cause the student to stumble and to need outside assistance in order to handle it with comfort. The instructional level is determined by a 95 percent accuracy in word recognition, and a comprehension score of at least 75 percent. The oral reading at this level should be generally tension-free and there should be evidence of proper phrasing and rhythm (Betts, 1946, p. 539).

Frustration level

The frustration level marks the point at which the child can no longer function adequately with the material. He makes so many errors and has such difficulty in comprehending what he reads that it is truly a frustrating experience. Usually the score the child achieves on a group silent reading test in class is a kind of frustration level, since he works at the test with high energy and concentration in his reading.

The selections that form the informal reading inventory can be administered to the child both in an oral reading exercise and in a silent reading exercise to see what differences there are. One of the primary reasons to have the child read orally is to give the teacher an opportunity to observe the phrasing and pronunciation skills he exhibits.

In addition to determining the student's reading levels and gathering information about his comprehension ability through informal techniques, the teacher can, by using checklists such as the following and a + and - notation, develop a picture of the child's strengths and weaknesses.

General Reading Skills:
_____Enunciation
_____Adequate phrasing
_____Word-by-word phrasing
_____Head movements, following with finger, posture, distractibility, tenseness
_____Word-recognition difficulties:
  _____Reversals
  _____Wrong beginning
  _____Wrong middle
  _____Wrong ending
_____Word-recognition skills:
  _____Use of context
  _____Adequacy of sight vocabulary
_____Other difficulties
  _____Repetitions
  _____Omissions
  _____Substitutions
  _____Other

Word Attack Skills:
_____Blending skill
_____Resorts to spelling attack
_____No method of word analysis
_____Recognition of familiar parts
_____Recognition of parts of compound words
_____Recognition of word roots
_____Recognition of suffixes
_____Recognition of prefixes
_____Consonant sounds
_____Vowel sounds

Other Relevant Data:
_____Hearing status
_____Visual status
_____Speech difficulties
_____Other physical difficulties
_____Fluency in language usage
_____Chief interests
_____Ability to concentrate
_____Persistence in tasks
_____Emotional reactions (confident, shy, overaggressive, negativistic, cheerful, etc.)
_____Attitudes (toward school, teacher, reading)
_____Home environment
_____Other observations

The following information can be obtained by watching the child as he reads silently from basic reader selections:

Name and grade level of book
Rate (words per minute)
Degree of comprehension
Vocalization (degree of lip movement, whispering, audible speech)
Finger pointing
Head movements
Signs of tenseness
Posture
Distractibility
Other habits

Observation in the classroom--Observation is a technique that can and should be employed in the classroom at all times. Even while instructing the class as a whole, a teacher can be noticing how the class and certain individuals are responding to the instruction.

A teacher easily identifies a student who cannot read: He avoids reading and gets better marks in subjects that do not require reading. Upon closer observation, the teacher may discover difficulties in vocabulary, word recognition, and comprehension. From further observation and interviews he may infer that emotional difficulties also enter into the student's reading disability.

Observation is a basic technique. Requiring no extra time or materials it is employed every day by every teacher. Usually observations go unrecorded; they are used at the first opportunity to help the student.

Limitations

While observation is excellent for understanding the way a student reads, it fails to tell *why* he reads as he does. One can only make inferences about the causes of the student's successes or failures.

Four specific principles to keep in mind when observing individuals are:

1. Since the student is always changing and growing, an observation that was made last year may not describe his present reading performance.

2. A teacher can observe only a small part of a student's total behavior. On the basis of such limited information, the teacher can make tentative generalizations about the student's reading.

3. Observations made by a teacher may tell more about the teacher than about the student. His first impression of the student, his philosophy of education, and many other factors may color what he sees.

4. Ideally, observations should be interpreted in conjunction with interview, test, and other data. However, observations often are the only data available at the moment, and sometimes action should not be deferred.

Analysis of Classroom Situations

Teachers are confronted daily with situations from which they can understand their students' reading. A detailed analysis of these situations serves as a guide to observation; it alerts the teacher to reactions or behavior which he might have overlooked otherwise. He may either start with the situation and describe the understanding he hopes to obtain from it, or start with the understanding and decide from which situations such understanding can be obtained. He should try to systematize his observations with checklists, thus making learning patterns more evident.

The following checklists show kinds of information about students' reading that may be obtained in different classroom situations. In the lower grades, students are given many opportunities to tell their experiences to others. From listening to his students, a teacher learns about their vocabulary and language patterns, their interests, and personality traits. Also important are comments about home conditions and attitudes. Some specific observations to check are:

Language abilities and vocabulary: meager___, rich___, accurate___
Sentence structure: incomplete sentences____, simple sentences____, complex sentences_____
Imagination: creative___, bizarre___
Organization: recounted events in proper sequence___, well-organized___, disjointed____.
Sense of humor: enjoyment of humor____, makes others laugh___

When students read aloud, the teacher has the opportunity to observe their word recognition skills, pronunciation, phrasing, and expression. The student often reveals his attitude toward reading--whether he reads with enjoyment, indifference, dislike, anxiety, resistance, or hostility. Dramatized reading gives an even better picture of the student's ability to read with expression, feeling, and meaning. Some specific observations are:

Method of word attack: sounds out words___, tries to analyze structure___, uses context clues___
Word recognition problems: skips words___, reverses letters, words, phrases_____, substitutes words____,guesses wildly____

Substitutions of words give the teacher valuable clues about the student's comprehension of the material he is reading. If he substitutes a word that makes sense in the context of the sentence, he is probably reading for meaning; however, if the word substituted makes no sense, he is merely pronouncing words with little understanding of what he reads. When a student comes to an unfamiliar word, the teacher should observe what kinds of words give him difficulty: common words, long words, words within his experience, or words foreign to him. The teacher should also observe how he goes about finding the meaning of unfamiliar words. Some specific observations are:

Phrasing: reads word by word______, reads in phrases or other thought units_________, loses place easily___________, reads clearly and with expression_________

Comprehension: recognizes basic vocabulary at sight_________, shows an understanding of material read______, sees relationships and sequences of ideas_________, can discuss what he has read___________, shows originality in interpretation_____

A student's reading interest or level may be indicated by his selection of reading material in a free reading or library period. His behavior during silent reading indicates his power of concentration. (Is he merely daydreaming or is he really thinking about what he reads? If he is distracted, what caused it?) Some specific observations are:

Approach to books: leafs through many books______, chooses quickly______; looks first at chapter titles and/or table of contents_____, pictures______, printed pages______; tends to choose small books _______, large books______, one kind of book_______, a particular author or series_______, is rather uniform in choices_____, chooses a variety of books_______, chooses books at his own age level of interest _______, below________, above___________; takes books home often_______, seldom________, never__________; reads them through______; can discuss what he has read; returns books on time________, undamaged___________; asks for books he does not find on shelves_________

Oral reports are another good way of observing students' interest in certain topics and their ability to organize and report effectively to their classmates. By observing the audience, the teacher can get an indication of their ability to listen and evaluate the reports given.

The teacher will observe that some students catch on quickly while others need to have a new concept explained several times. While the slow learners should not be ignored, the student who learns quickly should not be held back until the others catch up. While most teachers are aware that retarded readers are often embarrassed when they are laughed at for their mistakes, many fail to realize that the bright child who finds pleasure in reading may suffer equally from an anti-intellectual spirit. Specific observations are:

Attitudes: eager to participate_____, interested________, indifferent______, withdrawn_________

Creativity: inventive________, shows imagination________, is intellectually curious__________, shows maturity of interests____________

While observation is only one of several techniques that should be employed, it can be useful and helpful to the classroom teacher. He can learn much about his students through this method that he would not learn while using only a written test. The teacher needs only to make sure that observation is used in conjuction with other data.

For additional suggestions see Boyd, Guy L., and Tinker, Miles A., *Reading Difficulties: Their Diagnosis and Correction*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967; and Strang, Ruth, *Diagnostic Teaching of Reading*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

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No. 4-D

Individualizing Reading Instruction

The need for individualizing instruction in reading grows out of the wide range of abilities and interests of children, and the differences in their instructional needs. Regardless of the organization of the reading program, it remains the responsibility of the teacher to adapt the learning program to each child's individual needs.

The chief objectives of individualized learning is to release the potential of the individual learners. For the teacher to engage successfully in releasing the potential of these individuals in reading, he must have an awareness of the reading levels, interests, and personal adjustments of the children in his classroom.

Determining Reading Level

The first step in individualizing reading instruction is to determine children's levels of reading ability and to discover their interests. Informal reading inventories, standardized survey and diagnostic tests are commonly used methods for determining reading levels. Interests can be discovered by observing children during class activities, interviewing them, and asking them to complete interest inventories.

After the levels and interests of the children in the classroom have been determined, the children should be allowed to seek what is of interest to them and select what will satisfy them. For that reason, it is absolutely essential that a large supply of reading material over varied areas of interest be provided. Three books of different titles per child is a minimum requirement. At least 100 books within the classroom at all times is also necessary, with many of these titles circulating. Primary teachers will need titles for abilities ranging from picture books of the earliest prereading levels to books on at least the fourth-grade level. As the age increases, the difficulty levels of materials should be correspondingly increased to meet the needs of the youngsters.

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Planning Structure Organization of Daily Program

After the teacher has decided when and who will participate in this program, he should set up the organizational structure of the daily program. Much of this, of course, depends upon individual classroom situations and time allotments available for reading, but there are some hints to scheduling that might be helpful to the novice teacher:

. Include a *planning period* with the children each day. During this time the planning serves a dual purpose. It motivates the children--enticing them to the activities which lie ahead, and it also informs the class as a whole of the activities for which to prepare. Included in this planning period should be--

--A discussion of who needs to select new materials to read and when they will do it. It is during this time that the teacher can show new materials, activities, books, magazines, etc., which have arrived and sell some of this additional "wares."

--A discussion and planning of who will be working alone and with others so that the room can be properly arranged and supplies provided. Plan independent reading activities.

--A discussion and solution (if possible) of any pertinent problems concerning routine, such as the problem of traffic around bookshelves, etc.

--The arranging for conferences, consultations, and individual assignments.

Following this planning, each child should know exactly what he is to do during the reading period. Activities can be listed on a chart for easy review.

A *sharing period* must be included in the schedule, and some suggest that it best follows the planning period, since the teacher and class are together as a group during this time. Others suggest that the sharing period come at the beginning of the day and bring the class together for the next school period. This may also be scheduled once per week.

A large block of time must be alloted for the *self-selection reading period* and independent activity period. This is the main period in which students work independently while the teacher holds conferences with individuals or conducts small-group skill development instruction. A finish-up bell should ring ten minutes prior to the end of this time block so that children will complete what they are doing and clean up.

An *evaluation period* or summary period at the end of the reading time allottment should be provided so that the children can record their progress in their individual files, identify future needs and plans, and informally appraise the reading activities of the day with the class. Some group skill-development instruction where the class as a whole is weak can be incorporated during this period as well.

Special periods, from time to time, might be arranged for free-choice activities and individual responsibilities. The teacher could use this time to catch up on records, to meet with individuals, or to enjoy the activity of the classroom.

Planning is essential to alleviate many behavioral problems that could arise. The exact character and nature of the teaching schedule, however, will depend entirely upon the needs of the children and the purposes of instruction.

Conferences

The individual conferences with each youngster serve as the high point in individualizing the reading program. A one-to-one relationship is the best way to meet the individual differences within the classroom.

Conferences can be initiated in the first-grade year, using an individualized language experience story approach for a beginning. As the children begin to read books, conferences can be arranged to check a representative sample of the child's reading. This sampling is selected by the child, and the teacher should check only the *best* reading of which that child is capable. This session can be utilized also for individual instruction. The ways of organizing these sessions are numerous, yet there are some general principles and procedures which can be followed for effective conferences:

Establish a time limit--not necessarily for rigid enforcement, but to set a goal for the teacher. Lengthy comprehensive conferences might be necessary at first to help initiate the program. An often suggested time limit is from three to ten minutes, averaging five minutes per child. Many occasions, however, will demand more time.

See approximately a quarter to a third of the class each day. Specific figures, however, are strictly dependent upon the needs of the youngsters. Often there will be youngsters who might confer with the teacher daily, while others might only require four or five conferences per month.

Arrange conferences

--on a voluntary basis with the youngsters signing up on the chalkboard, a calendar, or a sign-up schedule for their time, or by verbal request. This is the most desirable.

--By teacher invitation--using the seating arrangement, alphabetical order, or some such scheme, establish a cycle of conferences which rotates.

--On a ratio system with some children seen once and others twice in a specific cycle.

Teachers and children can schedule their conferences during the planning period or, if a sign-up sheet is provided, anytime during the day.

If the volunteer system is used and a child does not volunteer, the teacher can call upon the child and inquire as to how he can be taught to read better if he doesn't come to the teacher for help or sharing.

The conference with individual children should be relaxed, yet purposeful. This is a time to gain information, share, engage in personalized teaching, evaluate, and plan for the next step in reading. It is a warm, intimate time for the teacher and the child.

During the conference the teacher should--

--Discuss with the child the choice of a book being read.
--Discover the child's feelings toward the book.
--Hear the child read orally.
--Evaluate and work on deriving word meanings.
--Evaluate word attack skills and work on those needing improvement.
--Work on development of specific skills.
--Check on children's understanding of specific passages or sections of the book.
--Make assignments or plans to develop a specific skill.
--Make assignments or plans to reinforce a specific skill.
--Guide the child in selecting his next book.

The individual conference should leave the child eager and ready for the next conference. Praise or some positive comment concerning the child's progress should be included, especially at the end of the conference.

Occasionally, it might be convenient or appropriate to group from two to five children together for a conference--for example, if a few students read the same book at the same time. Ideas and interpretations could be shared in a group conference arrangement. Some experts suggest a small group conference plan for primary children. In this arrangement, five to eight children gather around the teacher, each reading his own self-selected book at his own rate. One child at a time from this group has individual reading guidance with the teacher for a few minutes. Then that child becomes a member of the group again while the teacher gives her attention to another member of the same group for a short period of time. This continues until everyone in the group has conferred with the teacher, or the reading period is over. The children may begin as a group all at the same time or may voluntarily come and go from the group.

Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping is an important part of any instructional program. In a classroom correction program, where many activities go on at one time, it becomes especially important if the program is to run smoothly and children's needs are to be served. Both teacher and children can be involved in this task with the teacher concentrating on evaluation of progress and needs and the children concentrating on recording tasks completed.

The teacher should keep detailed records which will give him a general picture of the child--his interests, abilities, and attitudes. This would include the results of mental tests, reading tests achievement and capacity, and results of oral reading tests. The physical and mental characteristics of a child should also be noted. Cumulative record information such as the child's interests, strengths, and limitations is helpful as well. In this more specific record, approaches and techniques found to be effective when working with the youngster should be recorded, along with notations regarding specific needs and types of help needed and given.

Less formal records might include checksheets of dates of individual conferences, summaries of needs of individuals as shown through conferences or through observation during class activities, and notations of general class needs.

The teacher should take careful notes during an individual conference. The recordkeeping system used by the teacher should be simple yet functional--recording the overall skills, attitudes, and understandings of the child. Record cards, checklists, or a looseleaf notebook can be used effectively. Notes recorded are valuable in planning for the next conference and for group work. The teacher might use a form such as that reproduced below for keeping track of progress and further needs.

Name			Date		
Book Title	Grade Level	Skill Development	Analysis Difficulty	Ability	Assignment

After conferences have been held, it is often helpful to go back over the notes recorded and summarize the needs revealed. This summary could take a form such as the following:

Date	
Conferences with:	
1.	5.
2.	6.
3	7.
4.	8.
Group work with:	
Initial consonants	Oral reading
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
Individual work:	
1. J. Jones-reading for details	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Regardless of the particular forms used in recordkeeping, procedures should be kept as simple as possible. Incorporating a code or a personal shorthand also helps in recording during the conference. The records may show, in addition to reading skills or needs, other areas such as spelling or science.

The records that each child keeps enable him to follow his own reading progress. The youngsters readily respond to this responsibility, and their records prove to be a valuable aid during individual conferences as they provide the teacher with insight into each child's reading pattern.

Recordkeeping must not be overemphasized; however, the children should record every book they read in their own personal files. Simplicity is the key in children's records. Records should not be so demanding that a child would prefer not to read, yet they should allow for personal reactions. Some authorities suggest that the forms of children's records be changed frequently. Records should show what and how many books were read and the specific skill tasks the children have completed.

Suggested ways for children to record their reading are many and varied, such as:

- Make scrapbooks of illustrations and summaries of stories.
- Make charts displaying various types of material read.
- Make a collection box of "souvenirs" from good stories--such as new words learned, funny incidents, etc.
- Make charts which would evaluate the stories read according to criteria set by the class.
- At the beginning of a program, use a weekly reading survey in which the child accounts for the number of pages read each day, the approximate amount of time spent browsing, reading books, newspaper, etc. This helps "time wasters" get into the reading habit.

- Put each child's name on a divider in a file box. Cards are available with categories of books listed on them (fiction, history, science, biography, humor, animal stories, poetry, newspaper, magazine, etc). As the child completes a book he fills out the card with his name, the name of book, author, date finished, type of book (biography, fiction, etc.), identification of important characters, and a sentence or two about the plot, new words and meanings. The card is filed behind his divider. If preferred, summaries of this type could be done on record sheets for inclusion in a looseleaf folder.

Skill Development

The success of a youngster learning to read rests primarily upon how effectively he learns the essential reading skills. The teaching of skills in the primary grades is not the final goal, however; for the purpose of teaching skills is to help the child read better and enjoy reading. The extent to which youngsters read on their own, independently, indicates the success of instruction.

Building skill is an internal, active, and individual process. The procedure involves identifying the skill, learning what it is and does, practicing the skill by performing it, and succeeding or further correcting the skill until success is evidenced.

The teaching of skills should not be isolated from the reading act itself. For this reason most of the skill instruction in individualized reading is handled in the individual conferences when the child shows a need for it. Reading specialists differ in their opinions of the proper sequence of skill development. By checking various basal textbook manuals a teacher can discover the variety of these opinions. It might be helpful, though, for the teacher to have at least one basal textbook manual on hand to use as a guide in developing skills.

The individualized reading program allows for flexibility in the pace in which these skills are taught, yet the sequential development does much in building an effective framework for reading. Walter Barbe has formed lists of skills to be developed at the various grade levels of instruction (Barbe). He suggests that the child's skill instruction be geared to his grade level. After these skills have been acquired, the youngster should review and practice them rather than proceed to skills at a higher level. This does not suggest that the child read material only on his grade level, but rather that his skill instruction be geared only to his grade level.

It is advisable to keep a checklist in the record of each child so that, as a skill is mastered, the teacher can check it off the list and proceed to others. (See the three checklists attached as samples.)

Skill Evaluation

In evaluating whether skills have been acquired, and the progress of the child, it is necessary to gain as much information as possible before making any judgment. Information may be gained in many ways--formally and often informally.

The methods by which children are evaluated can be similar to those used in other reading programs. They include an analysis of--

--informal and standardized test results
--checklist of skills
--inventories of the child's needs
--child's oral reading
--teacher observations of child's attitudes, interests, and purposes for reading, and how much the child reads
--teacher-pupil conference records
--child's self-evaluation
--child's independent reading record
--tape recordings of the child's reading early in the year as compared to subsequent tapes noting progress
--parents' appraisals of the child's reading

Comprehension Skills Checklist

Name________________________

Grade__________________________ Age__________________________ Date______________

Skill	Mastery		
	Poor	Average	Good
Ability to understand meaning			
. Word			
. Sentence			
. Paragraph			
Ability to recall main idea			
Ability to give supporting ideas			
Ability to retell a story in sequence			
Ability to draw conclusions from given facts			
Ability to evaluate material read			
Ability to relate reading to experience			
Ability to use sources of information			
. Table of contents			
. Dictionary			
. Maps			
. Index			
Ability to make comparisons between two or more versions of a story			

Word Attack Skills Checklist

Name________________________________

Grade_________________________Age____________________Date____________________

	Mastery		
Skill	Poor	Average	Good
Recognition of basic sight vocabulary			
Ability to sound out new words			
. Recognition of consonant sounds			
. Recognition of vowel sounds			
. Knowledge of syllabication			
Ability to analyze word structure			
. Understanding of syllabication			
. Understanding of root words			
. Understanding of prefixes			
. Understanding of suffixes			
Ability to use context clues			
Ability to supply synonyms and antonyms			
Ability to use a dictionary			

Oral Reading Checklist

Name____

Grade____________________________Age_________________________Date______________

Skill	Mastery		
	Poor	Average	Good
Good reading posture			
Ability to utilize word attack skills			
. Sounding out new words			
. Pronouncing words correctly			
. Using structural parts			
. Using combined methods of word attack			
Ability to phrase meaningfully			
Ability to recognize and use punctuation symbols			
Ability to identify main ideas			
Ability to read fluently and enunciate clearly			
Ability to convey meaning and feeling to listeners			

Conclusion

Individualized reading is a way of thinking about reading; it is an attitude. Flexible by nature, there is no step-by-step program to incorporate into the schoolday. Each child is an individual and each teaching situation requires an individualized method of instruction. Variety in both methods and materials is inherent in this personalized plan. The variety of ideas presented in this document serves to supplement the ideas of individual teachers utilizing this plan. The ideas are as flexible as the plan itself, can be adapted to any type of reading situation, and should stimulate further ways to reach the goal of helping all children learn to read and enjoy their reading experience.

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...for
the
TEACHER

No. 4-E

Classroom teachers are constantly confronted with many levels of reading ability, and must adapt their teaching methods accordingly. Through ERIC, teachers can stay abreast of the latest research, development, and current practice on the teaching of reading. Following are some reading research documents recently entered into the ERIC system. Included in each entry is the identifying number, pages, and cost of ordering the document from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, National Cash Register Co., 4936 Fairmont Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20014 either in microfiche (MF) or hard copy (HC).

The Use of Original Instructional Materials as a Stimulus for Improved Reading. ED 019 731. 6 p. MF - 25¢; HC - 40¢.

State Certification of Reading Teachers and Specialists--Review of the National Scene. ED 014 384. 9 p. MF - 25¢; HC - 55¢.

An Analysis of Eight Different Reading Instructional Methods Used With First Grade Students. ED 014 375. 23 p. MF - 25¢; HC - $1.25.

Reading Handbook for Secondary Classroom Teachers. ED 014 398. 40 p. MF - 25¢; HC - $2.10.

Teaching Reading. What Research Says to the Teacher, No. 1, ED 018 329. 36 p. MF - 25¢; HC not available from EDRS.

Basal Reader Programs--How Do They Stand Today. ED 019 198. 14 p. MF - 25¢; HC - 90¢.

Specific Techniques for Teaching. ED 019 599. 35 p. MF - 25¢; HC - $1.85.

Developing Original Materials in Reading - A Guide for Teachers. ED 020 445. 85 p. MF - 50¢; HC - $4.35.

Diagnostic Teaching in the Classroom. ED 022 630. 13 p. MF - 25¢; HC - 60¢.

Trends and Practices in Secondary School Reading: A Report on Recent Research. ED 024 560. 143 p. MF - 75¢; HC not available from EDRS.

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